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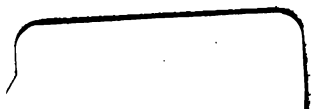
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Willm Marshall
Ex Dono
Authoris



A N
ARGUMENT
F O R
Infants Baptisme,

Deduced from the
ANALOGY of FAITH,
A
Harmony of *Scriptures.*

In Which,
In a Method wholly new, and
upon Grounds not commonly ob-
served, the Doctrine (of *Infants*
Baptism) is fully Asserted, and the Ob-
jections against it, are obviated

By **Richard Burthogge, M.D.**

L O N D O N,
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11

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11/11/1917

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TO THE
Excellent Lady,
THE
Lady ANNE DRAKE,
OF
Place in Buckland Monachorum, in the County of
Devon.

Madam,

What is done in the
following *Letters* in
Defence of *Infants*
Baptism, is so justly Your
A 2 Lady-

The Epistle

Ladyships upon so many
Titles, that to disown it by
Dedicating of *Them* to any
Other, or not to own it
by not Dedicating of *Them*
to Your Ladyship, would
be as great Injustice, as, but
for your Interest in *Them*,
to do the last, a Presump-
tion.

The First of *Them* is a
Second Edition of a *For-*
mer sent my Adversary ; in
which (as I thought the Re-
turn he gave, obliged me
to do) I made such *Alte-*
rations, *Additions*, and *E-*
men-

Dedicatory.

mendations, as might illuminate my Principal Argument; without engaging me in Matters Forraign to it. And to his Rejoynder unto *This* as so Enlarged, the *Second* is a *Reply*: and those that follow, are Defences to Both.

My *Argument* is founded on that *Covenant of Grace* it pleased God to make with *Abraham*, and with his *Seed*: In *which*, as he gave Himself, and all he hath to *Abraham*, and to his *Seed*; so he requires (what is most

The Epistle

highly reasonable he should) that *Abraham*, and all he owned, and that *Abraham's* Seed, and all they own, should be *His*: And that in Token of being so, both *Abraham* himself should keep the Covenant, by wearing the Initiating Sign thereof himself, and putting it on all *His*, (that was capable of it) and also, that his Seed should keep it in like manner. Certain it is, the Seed of *Abraham* is as much obliged to keep the Covenant, as *Abraham* himself; [Thou
as a

Dedictory.

shalt keep my Covenant therefore, Thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations.]

And I have proved the Believing Gentiles to be *That Seed*; so that, though the Gentiles must believe, to become the Seed of *Abraham*; yet, on becoming his Seed, they come also under the Obligation to observe the Covenant, as much as *Abraham* himself.

I have also proved, That the Covenant of *Abraham*, is the first Solemn Formal Covenant of Grace, for E-

The Epistle

ternal Life and Salvation,
through our Lord Christ,
that, in Account and Rec-
koning of the Scriptures, it
pleased God to make with
Man; and consequently,
that the First Separate
and Instituted Church, was
then appointed in the Fa-
mily of *Abraham*. So that,
from the very *Beginning*
that it pleased God to Esta-
blish and Ratifie his Cove-
nant, and to Constitute and
Frame a Church, as ^{he} did Or-
dain the Signing of the *A-*
dult; so he did the Signing
of

Dedictory.

of Infants: Therein laying the Foundations of the Common-wealth of Israel in the Membership of Children, as well as in that of the Parents. God never Constituted any Formal Church, until he had made a Formal Covenant; and the Sign of the Covenant, is the Rite of Initiation into the Church: None comes into the Latter, but by the Former; and Baptism is such a Sign.

I do not say, That Baptism is come in the Place of

The Epistle

Circumcision; I know too well the use is made of that Expression, though in it self, and as meant, it be most Innocent and Inoffensive: But I say, It cannot be denied, that as Circumcision was the Initiating Rite and Sign before the Coming of *Christ*; so (that) *Baptism* is after it. And that, *Nam*, to dedicate and give a Person to *God* visibly and solemnly, is, by that Sign and Rite to Matriculate him; that is, to Enter and Initiate him into the Church.

And

Dedictory.

And now, *Madam*, Is not the *Baptism* of *Infants*, in the Notion I have of it, a thing of High and Spiritual Nature, and of great Significancy? When it is not *meerly* Baby-sprinkling, and Sealing to a Blank, as some do phrase it: But done in token of our *Dedicating* of *Them* unto *God*, and in Evidence and Token that they are His. All Delivery and Surrender must pass with some Formality, some Rite, and *Baptism* is that Formality, that Rite, by
which

The Epistle

which we Christians do pass over, and assign our selves, and all our Children to God.

The fair Stating and Illustrating the mentioned Points, in which I beat a Path but little trodden, is mainly the Business of the *Letters*, of which I make a Humble Offering to Your Ladyship: In writing *which*, next to the Zeal and Deference that I ow'd to *Truth*, I propounded to my self no greater Satisfaction, than *the Occasion* they would

Dedictory.

give me, of gratifying an
Ambition I have ever had,
to Publish my self,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most
Humble and Devo-
ted Servant,

Richard Burthogge.

Adver-

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TO THE

READER.

THE Concurrence of Events, that, at last, prevailed upon me to engage in the Controversie of Infants Baptism, (managed on my part in the following Letters) was so little ordinary ; that, if any be enough to make a Providence, This, Reader, were it proper to acquaint thee with it, would, I am confident, even in ~~thy~~ Judgment, be thy Perswasion
other-

Advertisement

otherwise what it will, appear a great One.

The Letters themselves do intimate on what Occasion originally they came to be Written, and also how to be Published, and that too without my Adversaries; and therefore, I need not give my self the trouble of Writing, or thee the trouble of Reading more, in reference to these Points. Only, it may not be improper to do my self this piece of Justice, to add, That though I do not Publish my Adversaries Letters, (for that I leave to him, as most proper): yet I have not been wanting in mine Own, to Publish all his Arguments that concern me, both in all the Strength he gives them, and with all the further Inforcement my self could possibly add to them. This, a Judicious Reader

to the Reader.

Reader will easily perceive me to have done; and this I did, as well for that Respect and Care I owe to my own Reputation, as for that I owe and pay to Truth. I am of Alexander's Mind; I would not steal a Victory; and Truth need not: It is stronger than all things. I acknowledge, I have received a Letter from him, since my Last; but that Letter (as Others) so little to the Purpose, unless Reflections and Extravagancies be so, that I do not find my self obliged to any other Answer, than what in my Last is added and marked thus [*], and that's but little: And an understanding Reader will plainly see, there was not much need of that: It is but one Paragraph, and two or three Words, by way of Illustration.

Some

to the Reader:

Some happily may admire, that in a Rich and Fruitful Subject, as this is, I am so barren in Citations; but they may please to know, that (seeing a Doctrine is not true because a Multitude avouch it, any more than a Custom good because a Multitude follow it) I do not value Authorities in the Search and Investigation of Truth, further than as they are Evidences to Matters of Fact. Indeed, on this Account I might have Cited properly enough, many hundred Authors, as Witnesses, to confirm Baptism to have been of old a Jewish Ceremony, used in Initiation of Profelytes, both Male and Female, Adult and Infant; but that was done abundantly before, by the Learned Dr. Hammond, (as I remember) in a set Discourse of

(b) Bap-

Advertisement

Baptism, and incidentally by Mr. Ainsworth, in his Annotations on Genesis 17th; and by many others: and Repetition is a dull thing. The Argument I go upon, as I do manage it, is not common; and hath little Authority to make it good, beside that of sound Reason, and good Sense, and that better of the Harmony of the Holy Scripture; into which, rightly understood, it doth already open no small Lights, and may do more, if well improved.

To the Question, How I came to hit upon it? I say, I was concerned to see an Article of that Importance, which Infants Baptism by most is taken to be of, and indeed is of, to hang on Wyres only, and (as some phrase it) by Geometry:

It

to the Reader.

It must, I thought, have sure and solid Foundations, and such I could not see it to be Owner of, unless it were inlay'd (as I find it is) in the very Constitution of an Instituted Church, and in the Harmony of Scripture. Analogy of Scripture, is the surest Basis of Truth, in matters of Revealed Religion; as Analogy of Nature is of Truth, in Points of Philosophy.

This Argument I have so much spoken to in the following Letters, that I think there needs no more to make it perfect, and fully convincing, but to add these few following Considerations.

First, That Baptism or Washing was at first a Jewish Ceremony, and that Aaron, and his
(h) Son

Advertisement.

Sons were Baptized or Washed with Water at the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation : That the Baptizing of Proselytes, very probably was done in imitation of That, and the other Washings among the Jews ; and to signify the Cleansing of Them from the Defilement of Gentilism : And that the Christian Baptism in the Institution of it, had Aspect to both These, is also probable ; we Gentiles being by Baptism sanctified unto God, and made his Priests ; which seems very clearly to be implied by the Apostle, when he calls Baptism, *water*, a Laver, (Washing our Translators render) of Regeneration, in Allusion certainly to the Laver under the Law, which was set between the Tent of the Congregation,

to the Reader.

gation, and the Altar. Compare
Exod. 40. 6, 12. with Tit. 3. 5.

Again, Let it be considered, that
as no Alteration in the least, in re-
ference to the Subject of Circum-
cision, was made by Moses, from
the Rule in the First Institution
under Abraham; so that under
Moses it is evident, First, That if
a Profelyte were Master of a Fa-
mily, the giving of Himself to
God by Circumcision, would not
suffice to qualifie him for the Pass-
over; except he gave his Family
too, and that all his Males were
Circumcized. God look'd not on
him as a Convert, if he gave not all
His, as well as Himself, Exod.
13. 48, 49. And this is the more
remarkable, for that the Profelytes
were (as) the First-Fruits of the
(h .) Gen.

Advertisement

Gentiles. Secondly, That those Strangers in the Family of a Jew, who were the Masters Own, or his Property, were on his Account admitted to participate the Passover ; for he was to give them unto God, as having Right and Dominion in them ; and therefore might dispose of them : For This only is the Reason, why the Servant of the Jew, who was Bought with his Money, might eat the Passover ; and the Hired Servant not ; namely, that the Former as being bought with his Master's Money, was his Property, his own ; and therefore given with himself to God, and so received God's Mark of Circumcision, and consequently became capable of the Passover : But the Hired Servant being not his Master's, but his own Man, conse-

to the Reader.

consequently could not, without his own Consent and free Act, be given and disposed of by his Master. But if he would Voluntarily be Circumcized, and so become Partaker of the Passover, nothing letted him though he were an Hired Servant, no more than any other Forreigner. See for this Exod. 12. 43, 44, 45.

The next main Consideration I would wish to be reminded seriously, is, That in the New-Testament no New Rule is given either by Jesus Christ Himself, or by his Apostles and Followers, about the Subjects of the Sign of the Covenant; which Sign now is Baptism: And therefore, certainly, it leaves us to the Grounds and Reasons of the Old-Testament, [and to conformable
(h a) and

Advertisement

and constant Practice in the Jewish Use of Baptism in the Admission of Profelytes;] especially seeing the Seed (which Seed Believers are in Christ) are under the same General Obligation to keep the Covenant in the Sign, and by the very self-same Rule and Direction which Abraham had himself. And then it is Rational to think, That as Abraham was made to understand it in Circumcision, so we must understand it in Baptism; namely, to take in Infants as well as the Adult. This is the more probable, because in the Gospel-Institution we find that Baptism went by Families and Houses, as Circumcision did both before the Law, and under it; as also, that in Baptizing of Profelytes, not only Male and Female,

to the Reader.

male, but (as I said) Adult and Infants were admitted.

In the last Place; It would be considered, that in the first Sign of the Covenant, which was Circumcision, though all Infants were not taken in directly and actually, yet none of them were excluded from it as Infants; but only as Females: For the Nature of that Sign was such, that, in the Actual Administration of it, no Female was a Competent Subject: So that, in the first Signing by Virtue of the Covenant; as much as any Adult Persons were taken in, so much those that were not Adult; even Infants were taken in also: And if then, the Females were not Actually signed; so neither in the Letter, and by express Denomination of them, were they.

Advertisement

they then taken into the Covenant. For as the Sign was directly given only to the Males; so the Promise also, in terms, was only to the Males; [Abraham and Isaac:] But then, as the Females were included in the Males, in the Covenant and Promise, (which, I think, no Body will deny;) so, by like Reason, they were included also in the Sign. If any ask the Reason, why the Females are not taken notice of in the Old Testament, as much as the Males? and why, at first, they were not, as it were, by name taken into Covenant, and so signed with the Sign of it; but included only in Men, and accounted as signed in them? there may be many Reasons; but among them, two especially. The First is, That God is Uniform in his Works; and that

to the Reader.

that, as in the First Creation, he made Adam first, who was then the whole Kind, and comprehended the Woman in his Rib; and then afterwards took the Woman out of Adam: So in the Restoration, or New Creation, he would first by Name begin with the Man, and take him into Covenant, and Sign him; and take the Woman in but Inclusively, as comprehended in Man, and as an Appendix to him; which he did in the Dispensation, under Abraham and Moses. But then, afterwards, as he took the Woman in the Creation out of Man; so under Christ, in the New-Testament Dispensation, he took the Woman in her own Name, and put his Sign on her too: Both Men and Women are Baptized. A Second,
and

Advertisement

and perhaps no less effectual Reason is, That the Woman had been first (as the Apostle observes) in the Transgression; she had spoyled the First Creation, and the Work of God in it; [What's this that thou hast done? saith God to the Woman:] Therefore, as a Mark of his Divine Displeasure, God would not in the Institution of his Covenant of Grace, take her in her Own Name and Person, or otherwise than by Inclusion in the Man, into the Participation of it; until by bringing forth the Lord Christ, the great Foundation of the New and Better Creation, she had made him, as it were, some Reparation; and therefore, Christ is emphatically said to be Made of a Woman. Methinks the Apostle hath an Aspect towards
both

to the Reader.

both these Reasons, in 1 Tim. 2.
13, 14, 15. But howsoever that is,
sure I am, 'tis out of question, that
before Christ, there was no little dif-
ference between Male and Female,
in the Account of Scripture: for if
a Woman bore a Man-Child, she
was to be unclean but Seven days, and
to continue in the Blood of her Puri-
fying but Thirty-three days: But if
she brought forth a Maid-Child,
then she was to be unclean Two weeks,
and to continue in the Blood of her
Purifying Sixty-six days: So much
Difference, Then, there was between
Male and Female; for so we read
in Exod. 12. 2, 4, 5, 6. But
Now, the Case is alter'd: For un-
der Jesus Christ there is no Diffe-
rence; no more Now between the
Male and Female, than between
the

Advertisement

the Jew and Greek ; for so the Apostle Gal. 3. 28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither Bond nor Free, there is neither Male nor Female ; for You are all one in Christ Jesus. A plain Text ; wherein the Apostle as well implies there Was a Distinction and Difference before, as he affirms that there Is none now.

As for mine Adversary ; though I do not take him to be the Greatest Clark in the World, or as Learned in the Learned Languages, and Human Authors, as many others ; and though I take it to have been a piece of Vanity in him, to tell me, as he doth, [That as he remembered, one of the School-men said, &c.] because I have Reason to believe, he understands the School-men, as little

to the Reader.

Hebrew or Greek : Yet I do not apprehend it any Disgrace (as some would have it,) to have been engaged with him ; both for that he is a careful, painful, and industrious searching Person, much conversant in the present Controversie ; and, I believe, can say as much for his Persuasion, as any other what ever : as also, for that the Point in Controversy between us, is not a Point of Human Learning : Here (for the main) is no need of Greek or Hebrew, or of the Subtilties of School-men, or of Exactness of Criticisme : It must be decided plainly by good Sense, and by the Harmony of the Scripture ; and an English Bible (to which he doth appeal) suffices for that.

I do confess, I believe that some of the Grounds which I have laid,
will

Advertisement, &c.

will have no little Influence toward an Alteration in many received Schemes : But whether I have laid them right or not, I am no competent Judge. For though I am much confirmed in the Verity of Them by their undergoing of One kind of Test, without any Loss ; yet before I do advance them from being Points of meer Opinion, to be Points of some Degree of Faith, I am willing they should undergo all Others. And therefore, Reader, they are put into thy Hands, (for I have done with them) to weigh and judge them.

ERRATA.

Page 2. line 4. add *be*. p. 12. l. 20. read *by*. p. 16. l. 20. dele *it*. p. 49. l. 27. read *to*. p. 53. l. 23. *le capable of it*. p. 54. l. 14. dele (). p. 99. l. 21. *id in way of Covenant through Christ for Grace*. p. 102. l. 7. read *of all the Faithful*. p. 103. l. 11. dele *now*. p. 105. l. 18. read *of Genesis*. p. 110. l. 3. add). p. 127. dele : p. 128. l. 30. read *be understood of*. p. 129. l. 5. read *same*. p. 130. l. 20. read *it*.

AN

[4]

AN
ARGUMENT

FOR

Infants Baptism, &c.

The First Letter.

Dear Sir,

I Cannot believe my self obliged by the Occasional Discourse (which I held almost a Year and three Quarters ago) about *Infants Baptism*, to ingage any further in that Controversie, much less deliberately and solemnly; yet, having received so large, and so elaborate an *Endeavour* for my Satisfaction, and so importunate and iterated Requests, to give
B you

you the Result of my most cool and serious Considerations of what you have done in *It*; I may not be so much wanting in Civility to your *Desires*, and in Obedience to the *Call* I believe in them, as to decline the Incumbence and Obligation under which *They* put me to answer: And so, either to receive my self a further Illumination in the Point, or (which is better, and which I hope) to give it.

Only, let me have leave to tell you, (That) I am sensible enough how difficult a Task it is, in it self, to Eradicate an *Opinion* grown inveterate by length of Time, and perhaps confirm'd by frequent Spoys and Trophies over weak Opposers of *It*; and that 'tis more difficult for one in my Circumstances, subject to a thousand Avocations and Diversions; and who, at the Arrival of your *Letter*, thought of nothing less in all the World, than of being engaged in this manner against *Anabaptism*; and with a Person, a great part of whose time hath been employed in Thoughts and Study about it.

And yet, under Disadvantages so great against so great Advantages, believing my self in the right; in that Confidence, I have made a Resolution to let you know my Sentiments; and the rather, because I take
you

for Infants Baptism. 3

you (and I wish, I may not be mistaken in it) to be so unfeign'd a Lover of Truth, and so Candid a one, that you will make Allowance for any *Byass* in your Mind, in favour of your Opinion, which a long *Prescription* may give it; and that you will not *Refuse* any *Light* that may be offered, if you have no other Reasons for doing So, than either that *It* is *New* unto you, or that you have not struck *It* your self.

As for my *Sentiments* on this Subject, that you may conceive *Them* with the greater Clearness, as also for Order sake, I will reduce them unto *Two Heads*. First, I will let you see the *Mistakes* under which you are, as to your Apprehensions of the *Grounds* of my *Arguments for Infants Baptism*, as deduced from the Covenant of *Abraham*. And *Then*, I will display the *Argument* it self in all its Evidence and Force, as it is bottomed on that *Basis*: And this, without concerning of my self in *Other Arguments* insisted on by others, and also touched and reflected on by you.

The *Mistakes* you are under in your Apprehensions of the *Grounds* of my *Argument*, are *Two*, and very great ones: The *First*, That you conceive me to raise my Superstructure of *Infants Baptism* on this Foundation, [*That the believing Gentiles,*
B 2 and

and their Posterity, are in All respects to be blessed, as believing Abraham was;] which, say you, is Absurd.

And well you may (say so;) for indeed, *Abraham* had peculiar Blessings appropriated to his Person; as to be the Father of all the Faithful, and particularly, of believing *Gentiles*, (the Father of many Nations;) and therefore, instead of *Abram*, he was called *Abraham*. But though *All* the Blessings believing *Abraham* had, did not descend on his Spiritual Children, or his Seed, the believing *Gentiles*; yet, if *Any* Blessing of believing *Abraham's* did descend; as *That* of the Promise did, it must be understood, (that) the *Obligations* and *Duties* arising from the Nature of the Blessing, (which did descend) or that are annexed to it, (if there be any *Such*) must descend too: And so, that the Seed, in that respect in which it is equally blessed with believing *Abraham*, must be equally obliged with him, to all the Duties and Incumbencies, that are the Consequents and Results of that Blessing.

Your *Second Mistake* is, That you apprehend me to conceive, [" That every Child
" of a believing Parent, by vertue of his
" Birth, Priviledge, and as he is a Natural
" Descendant of such a Father or Mother,
" is

for Infants Baptism. 5

“is a true Child of *Abraham*, or a Believer, (for that I mean) or, in your own words, *That the Natural Posterity of Believing Gentiles*, barely as such, are all of them the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, (or Believers) and consequently such as are entitled (on the Account of being his Spiritual Seed, or Believers) unto *Abraham’s Covenant and Blessing*.] And in Opposition unto *This*, you much enlarge ; shewing the many great Absurdities, and ill Consequences of it, even to *Fifteen* : Arguments, which truly as to any other who hath Sense I think, and I am sure as to myself, are all needless, and might all have been spared.

Certainly, I demand not half so much to enforce the Argument I used ; I think not every Child of a Believer to be a *Believer* himself in any Sense ; much less, that Saving Grace is as *Original* as Sin, or that it comes by Tradition. All I postulate to build my Argument, is, That the (true) believing *Gentile* doth not forfeit, by believing, his natural Right to his Child ; but that the Children of True Believers now, under the Gospel, are as much theirs, and in the same Right, as the Natural Children of *Abraham* were his. This is all the Question that I beg, and this sure you will not deny me.

Only, by the way, I pray you to make no more of my *Concession*, than I intend it for ; for when some Pious and very *Learned Men* have argued for *Infants Baptism*, from the *Children of Believers* their being *Abraham's Spiritual Seed*, they mean not, I suppose, by calling them *Abraham's Spiritual Seed*, as I do, and as you do ; that they are *Actual Believers*, and consequently *Children of the Faith of Abraham* ; but only, that they are Persons of a *Religious Consideration*, and (in some sense) *Holy*, and related to *God*. And meaning but *So* ; though I acknowledge *Children* not to be *Abraham's Seed* in the *Sense* I mentioned, as *Abraham's Seed* is taken for *Actual Believers*, and you have proved by *Fifteen Arguments* that they are not, nor can be *Abraham's Seed* in this *Sense* ; my *Concession* gives you no advantage, nor do your *Arguments* signify any thing against *Them* ; who, using the *Expression* in *Another Sense*, are nothing concerned ; for if *They* take *Spiritual Seed* in *One Sense*, and *You* in your *Arguments* take it in *Another*, you do not really oppose them, though you may think you do ; nor are your *Arguments* pertinent ; and the *Dispute* between you, as to that, is indeed but *Strife* about *Words*.

Thus

for Infants Baptism. 7

Thus I have, with all the Clearness and Fairness imaginable, let you see your *Two Mistakes* about the Argument I urged; and therefore, seeing you do not apprehend aright the Grounds on which I go (in it,) I am only obliged to you for your charitable *Endeavours* towards my Satisfaction; but not (in the least) for any *Effect* of those Endeavours.

It now remaineth, that I perform what I promised in the Second Place; which is, To lay out the *Argument* for *Pedobaptism*, as it is founded on the *Covenant*, or Blessing of *Abraham*, in all its Force and Evidence; which, to do to some purpose, I will demonstrate.

First, That the *Covenant* of *Abraham*, which is called the *Blessing* of *Abraham*, or the *Promise* of the *Spirit*, is still in being; and is that *Covenant* of *Grace* the true believing *Gentiles* are under.

Secondly, That in respect of that *Covenant* of *Promise*, which is called the *Blessing* of *Abraham*, and the *Promise* of the *Spirit*, or the *Spiritual Promise*, all the *Seed* that bath the *Benefit* of it, are under equal *Obligations* to the *Duty* and *Incumbence* arising from it, with *Abraham* himself.

Thirdly, I will shew, That the *Duty* and

Incumbence to which Abraham was obliged, arising from the Covenant, or Blessing given to him, was, by way of Restipulation, to dedicate and give himself, and all his to God; and, in token of that Dedication of himself, and of all that was his, to wear himself the Signe of the Covenant, and put it as a Cognizance, and Badge, and Mark of God upon all his that was capable of it.

Fourthly, I will also shew, That from Abraham's Dedication of himself, and of all his to God, there arises a Distinction of Holiness into Internal and External, Absolute and Relative; and that this Distinction (of Holiness) is Evangelical.

And having evidenced these Four things, I will then proceed, in short, to form my Argument.

In order to the evidencing of the First Particular, which is, *That the Covenant of Promise made to Abraham, which is called the Blessing of Abraham, and the Promise of the Spirit, or the Spiritual and Evangelical Promise, (that this) is still in being, and is the Covenant of Grace, into a Participation of which, the (true) believing Gentiles are taken: I only Premise, That That is the Covenant of Grace the believing Gentiles are under, Which is the true Ground*
and

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and Foundation of all their Hopes, and of all their Comforts; and *Which*, by having a Title to it, and Interest in it, doth give them a Title to, and Interest in the Coelestial Inheritance, the Heavenly Country, the Everlasting Mansions in the Father's House; and, in a word, to Salvation. And *This* the mentioned *Covenant*, the Blessing of *Abraham*, and the Promise of the Spirit is, and doth: *This* is the true Ground and Foundation of all the Hopes of *Gentile-Believers*, and of all their Comforts; and a Title in *This*, is the only Title they have to the Heavenly Blessedness and Salvation, or (as the Apostle is pleased to stile it) to the Inheritance. For thus in the *Third of Gallatians*, the Apostle carries it; when *Verse* the 16th, he affirms, *That to Abraham, and to his Seed, were the Promises made*, and *Verse* the 18th adds, *That if the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of the Promise; but God gave it (namely the Inheritance) to Abraham by Promise*. And by *What Promise*, but that ratified Covenant of Promise, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed*? As appears by comparing it with *Verse* the 16th. But he asserts *This* more clearly afterwards, in *Verse* the 20th; where he sheweth, both that the only Title to the Inheritance is Heir-

ship,

ship, according to the Promise; and that the only way of *Becoming Heirs* according to the Promise, and so of being interested in it, and entitled to it, is by becoming the *Seed of Abraham* to become the *Children of God*; and the only way of *Becoming the Seed of Abraham* (for the *Gentiles*,) is by *Putting on of Christ* through believing: For, saith he, *if you be Christ's*, or the Members of *Christ*; what then? *Then you are Abraham's Seed*; and what if *Abraham's Seed*? what then? *Then you are Heirs according to the Promise*. In short, this is the *Clymax*; if Believers, then *Christ's*; if *Christ's*, then *Abraham's Seed*; if *Abraham's Seed*, then Heirs according to the Promise: for the Promise is, *I will be a God to Thee, and thy Seed, and I will give to Thee, and thy Seed, &c.*

Nor doth it make any Alteration in the Case, that *Faith* is now the requisite Condition of Salvation, or that we must believe to be saved: *This* but evidences the more clearly, that the *Gospel* is but a Renovation of the Covenant of *Abraham*; for as it is through Faith, that we *Gentiles* do become *Christ's*, and by being *Christ's*, that we become the Seed of *Abraham*, and consequently Heirs of Salvation according to the Promise; So it was through Faith,
the

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11

the Righteousness of Faith, that *Abraham* (the Father of the Faithful) had the Promise himself: For so the Apostle, *Rom. 4. 13.* for the Promise, That he should be the Heir of the World, was not to *Abraham*, or to his Seed through the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith. *Abraham* believed God, and We *Christ*; it was through Faith, that *Abraham* had the Promise; and through Faith also, that we the believing Gentiles have it; as being Children not of *Abraham's* Body, but of *Abraham's* Faith, *Rom. 4. 12, 13, 16.*

And if the Promise made to *Abraham*, be the Ground and Foundation of all our Hopes, and all our Expectations, as we are *Christians*, and it be the True Covenant of Grace; to be sure, it is still *in being*, or we do but beat the Air, and are at a loss; our Hope is in vain, and our Rejoycing in vain; which God forbid: And in being it is; for the Law that came four hundred and thirty Years after, did not, could not *Disanul* the Promise that went before; and if the Law did not, if the Law could not, nothing else did, nothing else can *disanul* it: This the Apostle evidences, *Gal. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.* And surely, the Promise to *Abraham*, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed &c.* is a Covenant, a ratified Covenant, and confirm-
ed

ed by two immutable things, by Word and Oath, *In which it is impossible for God to Lie*; and therefore, cannot be disanulled; and if it be not disanulled, it is still in being.

Here I thought to have dismissed the First Particular, and so (to) proceed to the Second: But it strikes into my Mind, that you may think I have not clearly enough expressed what I mean by the *Covenant*, the *Blessing* and the *Promise of Abraham*, which did descend on the *Gentiles*; which if so, would be Matter of a fresh Dispute: And therefore, though I think the Scriptures I have insisted on already, do sufficiently instruct us in what the Promise is; yet, to leave no room for any further Mistakes, I shall be more express in it.

By the Promise, the Blessing, the Covenant of *Abraham*, (for under all these three Terms it is represented by the Apostle) I mean that Covenant of Promise made to *Abraham*, *Gen. 17. 7, 8.* consisting of *Two* Parts; a more *Spiritual* Part, in the 7th, *I will be a God to thee, and thy Seed*; and a more *Temporal* one in the 8th, *And I will give, &c.* And I take in *Both*, because I find the Apostle saying, *That to Abraham, and to his Seed, were the Promises made*: the Promises; not a Promise, (which had left it doubtful;) but the Promises, as speaking
not

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not of the *One* only, *I will be a God to thee, and thy Seed*, which is the Spiritual Part ; but of the *Other* also, which is the Temporal, *I will give to thee, and thy Seed, &c.* Thus the Covenant of Promise involveth and includeth in it *Two* Promises; the *One* of which indeed is *Principal*, the *Other* but *Additional* ; but *Both* are in the Covenant, in the Blessing, and consequently *Both* are ratified and established : The *Promises* were made to *Abraham*, and to his *Seed* ; the *Covenant* in both respects descends.

I know you take it for a very strong Argument, That the Covenant of *Abraham*, *Gen. 17. 7, 8.* cannot be the Evangelical and Gospel-Covenant ; because it is a *Mixt* one, and composed of a *Temporal* (as well as of an *Eternal*) Bequest : But for that Reason, I the *Rather* take it to be Evangelical ; For this is Gospel, that Godliness is profitable unto all things ; that is, in all respects, in respect of this World, and in respect of the *Other* : And why so ? Why, it hath the Promise ; *Having (the) Promise of the Life that now is*, as well as of that to come : And what is this but a *Finger*, to point you to the Covenant of Promise ; as the Evangelical Covenant, the Promise, the Blessing that did descend on the *Gentiles* ? *1 Tim. 4. 8.*

And

And indeed, the *Inheritance* promised to
 1 *Abraham*, and which in, by, and under
 him, is descended on the *Gentiles*, is not
 only a *Cœlestial*, but a *Terrestrial* one al-
 so: For by that Promise, *Abraham* was
 not only the *Heir* of *Heaven*, but also *Heir*
 of the *World*; and so the Apostle styles him :
 1 And the same Apostle tells *Us*, *All is Ours*;
 and *Abraham* being constituted by the Pro-
 mise, *Heir* of the *World*, He and his De-
 scendants, according to the *Flesh*, were to
 take Possession of it, and to have *Livery*
 of *Seisin* given in *Canaan*; a *Livery* of *Sei-*
 1 *sin*, which was given indeed, and taken but
 in *Part* of the *World*, (as *Livery* of *Sei-*
sin usually is) but in the *Name* of the
Whole.

It is true, *Canaan* only was promised in
 1 the *Letter*, and was Inherited only by the
 Carnal Seed and Descendants of *Abraham* :
 But then it must be considered, that in the
 Covenant there is more implied, than is
 expressed in the *Letter*; and that as in the
Letter it speaketh of the Seed which is Na-
 1 tural, namely *Isaac*; yet, in the *Mystery*,
 it meaneth *Christ*, and that Principally: So,
 though in the *Letter* it speaketh but of *Ca-*
naan, as given for a Possession, and enjoy-
 ed so by the Carnal Seed; yet in the *My-*
 1 *stery*, it means the whole *World*, of which
 Canaan

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Canaan was a Part: in which indeed he took Possession, or had Livery and Seisin given him; but, as I said, in the Name of the Whole. Abraham was Heir of the World; and so are all Believers, as Abraham's Seed; for All is Ours: But how? For We are Christ's, and Christ is God's: And it is, I will be a God to Thee, and thy Seed; which Seed is Christ. This is the Believer's Title, and this his Deed; his Charter, by which he holds All.

And having evidenc'd the *First Particular*, That the Covenant made with *Abraham*, or the Blessing of *Abraham*, the Promise of the Spirit is still in force, and is that Covenant of Grace by which believing *Gentiles*, the true Seed, now both have and hold their Title to Heaven, and to Earth too. It will not, I suppose, require either much Time, or much Argument, to secure the *Second*; which is, *That the true Spiritual Seed of Abraham, the believing Gentiles, who have the Benefit and Advantage of that Spiritual Promise and Blessing, and to whom it is made as well as to Abraham, are under equal Obligation to the Duty and Incumbence arising from it, or annexed to it, with Abraham himself. For it is a common Notion, a Sentiment approved by the Light of Nature, That he that reap-*
eth

eth any Profit and Advantage by a *Grant*, ought to bear the Burthen, and answer the Duty and Incumbence that accompanieth *It*. And indeed, to hope for *Salvation*, and other Benefits convey'd in the Covenant and Charter of *Abraham*, without submitting to the Duties and Obligations that do arise there-from, or are annexed thereto; were for a Person to claim an *Inheritance* by a *Deed* of Conveyance, without holding himself obliged to the Covenants and Provisions with which *It* is granted *Therein*. Certain it is, as I have shewn already, that the believing *Gentile* claimeth, hath, holdeth nothing, but in, by, and under *Abraham*: He is *Christ's*, and so *Abraham's* Seed; and so Heir according to the Promise: And he that claimeth, hath, holdeth nothing but in, by, and under *Abraham*, must claim, have, hold, as *Abraham* did, according to the Tenor and Obligation of the Deed of Gift, the Charter, the Covenant of Promise, which it pleased *God* to convey by, and with the same Incumbence and Duty.

And this remindeth me of the *Third Particular*, which I promised to demonstrate; namely, *That the Duty and Incumbence to which Abraham was obliged, arising from the Covenant or Blessing given to him, was,*
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in way of Restipulation, to dedicate and give himself, and all his, to God; and in token of that Dedication of himself, and all his, to put the Sign of the Covenant, as the Cognizance, and Mark, and Badge of God on all his that was capable of it, as well as to wear it himself.

I know it cannot be difficult to You, (if it can to any Other) to conceive that in *Restipulation* unto God, who had made over unto *Abraham*, not *Himself* only, but *All he has*, (that) *Abraham* Correspondently should give *Himself*, and *All he had* to God: And indeed, this *Mutual Stipulation* between God and *Abraham*, [That God and all His should be *Abraham's*, and *Abraham* and all his should be *God's*] is the very *Essence* and *Substance* of the Covenant: *I will be Theirs*, and *They shall be Mine*; *I will be a God to Thee and thy Seed*, and *Thou and thy Seed shall keep my Covenant*.

It is true, the Covenant doth run in *Absolute* and *Promissory* Terms, and therefore is called the *Covenant of Promise*; but yet to be a Covenant, as there must be *Parties*, so there must be a *Mutual Stipulation* between them: And here, the *Stipulation* on the Part of *Abraham*, though it be not so express and literal, is plainly implied in the *Duty and Incumbence* God imposes on
C
him,

him, in relation to the *Covenant*, as an Obligation and Consequence arising from the Nature and Merits of *It* : Which Duty and Incumbence, and the Consequentialness of it from the *Covenant*, is, *Gen. 17. Ver. 9. Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations.* Or, more consonantly to the Letter of the Original, but to the same Sense, (and in *Covenant-form*;) *I will be a God to thee and thy Seed, and I will give to thee and thy Seed, &c. and, Thou and thy Seed shall keep my Covenant.* In the *Former*, is the Stipulation or Promise *God* is pleased to make to *Abraham*, and to his *Seed* : And, in the *Latter*, the Obligation and Consequence it lies upon them ; and which, therefore, *God* expects too, as importing *Their Stipulation*, and that Acknowledgment they owe for *His*. *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore* : Therefore, wherefore ? Therefore, because
 1 I have Established my Covenant, to give my Self and all I have to thee ; to give my
 1 Self, and give *Canaan*, and in *Canaan* the World : Therefore, thou shalt give thy self, and all thine to Me : And in token of
 1 it, (that thy self and all thine is Mine) thou shalt observe my Covenant in the sign of it ;
 1 and that so, both as to wear the sign thy
 1 self, and to put it upon all thine that is capable

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pable of it. This is evident, *Gen. 17. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, &c. This is my Covenant,* namely, the sign Circumcision, &c.

You may here, perhaps, not a little wonder, that I use so *General* and comprehensive Terms; and that I say, the Obligation, which lay on *Abraham* from the Covenant, was to dedicate and give *Himself*, and *All His*, to *God*; and in token of it, not only himself to wear the Sign and Token of the Covenant, which then was Circumcision; but to put it on *all His* that were capable of it: I say, Happily you may not a little wonder, why I said not all his *Seed*; but all *His*: Which, if you do, you will no longer have no cause to continue it, than till I tell you, It is to signifie, that the Obligation on *Abraham* arising from the Covenant, was *Solemnly* to dedicate and give to *God*, together with himself, *All* that he had Property in, and Title to, and was Owner of; not his Natural Seed only, the Offspring of his own Body, but even his Servants or Slaves.

And here observe; if *Abraham* by virtue of the Incumbence and Obligation, which the Covenant of Promise did lay upon him, [*Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore*] was *Not only* to circumcize his Natu-

1 ral Off-spring, *But his Slaves and Servants*, (as he was, *Gen. 17. 10, 12.*) *It must needs follow*, that the putting of the Sign and Token of the Covenant upon *Children* (even then) arose *Not* from their being comprehended in the *Seed*, and as *God* was a *God* to *Abraham's* Seed, and from *God's* requiring the *Seed* to keep the Covenant: For *His* Infant Slaves and Servants, whom *Yet* he was obliged by the Covenant to Circumcize, were *Not* of his Off-spring and *Seed*.

1 But *How*, then, did the Obligation to Circumcize his Infant *Servants* and Slaves, arise from the Covenant; in which no mention, in the least, of Slaves and Servants; 1 but only of *Seed*? Certainly, no otherwise than in the *Way* I have mentioned, (and this Consideration makes it clear) namely, that *Abraham* in Restipulation and Answer unto *God*, was obliged to dedicate and give himself, and All he had to him, as 1 *God* did give, and convey, and make himself and all he hath to *Abraham*; and consequently, in Sign and Token of this, [That as *God* hath given and made Himself, and all He hath to *Abraham*; so that *Abraham* 1 must not only dedicate and give himself, but, which is the Consequence of it, all is his to *God*,] the Sign and Token of the *Covenant* between them, called *God's Cove-*

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nant, and consequently *God's* Sign and Mark, must be both on *Abraham* himself, and *On all that is his*: That is, It is not only to be worn by *Abraham*, to shew that he himself is *God's*, and that he hath given himself; or by his *Children*, to shew that they are *God's*, and that he hath given them: but even by his *Servants* and *Slaves*, to shew that he hath given *Them* too, and consequently *All* that he hath. And indeed, he that gives himself, gives *All* that he hath, with himself: He owns nothing, that is not *His own*. 'Tis as they were *Abraham's* Property, that his *Infant* *Servants* and *Slaves* were Circumcized; and, doubtless, *All* that was *Abraham's*, capable of Circumcision, had it on the same Account that *Any* had: And therefore, as the *Infant* *Slaves* were Circumcized as *His* Property, and by vertue of what is said to *Abraham*, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore*; so were *His Children* also: And Consider it, [All Infants were Circumcized by vertue of the Same Incumbence.]

As to your Wonder, why I do express the Obligation and Incumbence arising upon *Abraham* from the Covenant, in these terms, that *He was to dedicate and assign himself, and all his*; and, in token of it, *to put the Covenant* in the Sign of it, as the

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Mark

Mark and Cognizance of God upon himself, and on all his that was capable of it. You admire how *Capable* comes in; but you might with more Justice have admired, if it had been left out: For *Implied* it must be; It could not be his Duty to put the Sign upon *Uncapable* Persons. But your *Admiration* is *More* the Object of *Mine*, after you have *Granted*, that God commanded *Abraham*, (*Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed*) in *General* terms; wherein, you say, both Sexes may seem to be comprehended, (and indeed say I, are so) for if he did command in *General Terms*, that *Abraham*, and all *His* (*Seed* you say) should keep the Covenant in the Sign and Token of it; and yet afterward did Institute *Circumcision* to be that Sign and Token, which was not competent to all: How can the *Generality* of the Precept, (*Thou shalt put the Sign on all thine*; when *Circumcision*, that is *Not comperible to all*, is that Sign) be understood *Accommodously* and *Conveniently*, as it must be, but *Thus*; *Thou shalt put the Sign on All thine that are capable of it*; and the wearing of it by *These*, shall be *Interpreted* the putting of it on *All*.

By this time, I believe, you will be inclinable enough to grant, that I have proved

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ved sufficiently, that *Abraham* was obliged as to dedicate and give *Himself*, so to dedicate and give *All his*, his Children, and his Servants to *God*, Possessor of Heaven and Earth ; and, in *Token* of it, to put the Covenant upon *Them* (as far as they were capable thereof,) in the Sign of it, namely, Circumcision. But you will say ; “ It Seem-
 “ eth not to be, (but give me that Expression again, for *Tom* will be more *Positive*)
 “ it *Was* not done (you will say) with any
 “ Relation unto us believing *Gentiles*, who
 “ are not Circumcized : And that seeing
 “ there is a Change and Alteration made
 “ in the Sign, the former Obligation ceases ; for if Circumcision it self is past,
 “ and done away, no Duty and Obligation
 “ on that but commenced with it, can now
 “ abide and remain.

But I pray consider, that not only *Abraham* was under Obligation to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, but the *Seed* of *Abraham* also ; that is, *All those* to whom the Covenant is made, are equally obliged to the Observation thereof, in the Sign of it : (And therefore) not only *Abraham* was obliged, but his *Seed* too. For, as *God* is pleased to say, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed ; and I will give to thee, and to thy Seed* : So, he says, *Thou*
and

and thy Seed shall keep my Covenant. Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore; (and not only Thou, but) Thou, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations: Thou; thou and thy Seed.

So that, if the *Believing Gentiles* be (as indeed they be) the *True Seed*, and *Principally* intended in the Promise; for it is *Seed*, not *Seeds*: *Seed*; speaking but of one, and that One is *Christ*; and *Christ* not Personal only, but *Mystical*, or *Christ* with his Members; for it is of Many in One: For the *Seed*, which is to keep the Covenant, is to do it *in their Generations*; not in his Generation, but in their Generations, and that is Plural. I say, if the *Believing Gentiles* do become the *Seed of Abraham*, (as they do) they come also under *Equal Obligation* to observe the Covenant, with *Abraham* himself: For it is, *Thou shalt keep the Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed*. And to keep the Covenant, (as I have evinc'd already) is for him that is in it, in token of his Dedication and Assignment of himself, and of all his to *God*, not only to wear the sign of the Covenant himself in his own Person, but to put it upon all his that is capable of it; so to manifest, that he owns not any Interest or Property at all in any *thing*, or Title to any, but what he returns

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to God; and that both himself, and all his, are the *Lord's*. And think, Are not the believing *Gentiles* as much obliged to assign, and dedicate, and give all, as *Abraham*? Yes, doubtless, and are as much bound to *Shew*, and Own, and Declare they do so, as He.

But whereas it may be objected, “ That
 “ Circumcision was the Sign and Token
 “ of the Covenant then, [*This is my Cove-*
 “ *nant which you shall keep between Me and*
 “ *You, and thy Seed after thee; Every Man-*
 “ *Child among you shall be Circumcized:*]
 “ And that *Circumcision*, as being a Legal
 “ and Carnal Ceremony, is abolished un-
 “ der the Gospel; and therefore, as all In-
 “ gagement and Obligation unto *That*, so
 “ all Ingagement and Obligation unto any
 “ Sign and Token by vertue of the Com-
 “ mand of *That*, is ceased.

I answer, Though Circumcision, that at
First was the Sign and Token of the Cove-
 nant, be taken away; yet it will not fol-
 low; that the Obligation to observe and
 keep the Covenant in any *Other* Sign or
 Token, doth cease with it. And to de-
 monstrate this; it must be minded, that as
 the *Equity* and *Reason* of the Command
 doth hold in *Baptism*, as well as in *Circum-*
cision; and for any other Sign and Token,

1 as well as for *This*; and to the Seed, as well as to *Abraham*; God being as much a God to the *One*, as to the *Other*: So also that in the *Form* of the Words, the Obligation imposed upon *Abraham*, and his
 1 Seed, is in the *First* place, to keep the Sign and Token of the Covenant, or to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it: And but in the *Second* (place,) to observe Circumcision; namely, but as it is that Sign.
 1 So that a plain Distinction is made between the Obligation to observe the Sign and Token of the Covenant, (or to keep the Covenant in the Sign and Token of it) and to keep it in Circumcision, as that Sign and Token; the *Former* arising from the very Nature of the Covenant, (*Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore*) and therefore of as perpetual Obligation and Existence, as the Covenant it self: But the *Latter* is more
 1 positive, and Secondary. Wherefore, tho' there be an Alteration in the Second, it will not follow that there must be one in the First; or that the Covenant ought not to be observed in the Sign and Token of it,
 1 if, for certain Reasons, Circumcision be no longer; but something else be that Sign and Token: The taking away the *Second*, doth
 1 not destroy the First; for being before it, it may be without it. Thou shalt keep the
 the

the Sign of the Covenant, that is First; Circumcision is that Sign, that is Second: And why *One* in the First Place, and the *Other* but in the Second, but to shew, the Covenant must be kept in the Sign of it, even when no longer Circumcision, but some other thing is in the Counsel of *God* ordained to be that Sign? And indeed, it is much, that the taking, and the putting of the Sign of the Covenant, should (as it is) be called keeping of the Covenant? Must not we *Now* keep *God's* Covenant?

And to the end you may see the *Harmony* of the *Scripture*, and (with it) the Co-gency of that Illation, which I make from the *Form* of the Words here; see the like (Form of Words) in the *Fourth Commandment*, in relation to the *Sabbath*, bottoming the like Illation; *Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy*; that is first; and, as it is first, so it is primarily Moral, and Eternal and unchangeable: *But the Seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord*; that is in the second place, and is but secondary and positive. What? Doth the Obligation to the *First*, and that which is *Primary* in the Command, cease, because there is an Alteration in the *Second*; and that not the *Seventh*, but the *First Day* of the Week is now the *Sabbath of the Lord*? Who will say it?

So, though Circumcision be no longer the *Sign* and *Token* of the Covenant, but another thing be *It*; 'twill not follow, the Covenant is no longer to be observed in the Sign and Token of it, because not Circumcision; but that other Thing is now (become) that Sign and Token: Which you will conceive the better, if you bethink that Circumcision was not abolished in the Gospel, as it was of the Fathers, but as it was of *Moses*, (a Distinction *Christ* himself makes;) or not as it had relation to the Covenant of Promise, as the Sign of it, as if in that respect it were a weak and carnal thing; but as it was *Adopted* by the Legal *Mediator*, and made a Sign of that Administration and Covenant, in which *He* had to do; for afterwards, who so was Circumcised, did become a Debtor to the whole Law; and therefore, if the Law did cease, Circumcision could not continue.

But remember, it was on an Evangelical and Gracious Consideration, that Circumcision did become the Sign of the Legal Covenant or Administration: For why was it? Were there not other Matters enough to make Signs of, but that Circumcision, which was a Sign of the Promise, must be *Impropriated* to be the Token of the *Mosaick Covenant*? Why was it then? Not truly
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(as you may think) to make an Alteration in the *Promise*, in respect of the Subjects, to which the Sign *Thereof* was to be given, or of any Priviledges, or first and immediate Duties and Obligations of *It* ; but to establish and confirm the Promise. For Circumcision, the Sign and Token of the Promise, was, in Divine Wisdom, annexed to the *Legal Covenant*, (as the Sign and Token of *That*,) for the same Reason that *Jesus Christ* himself, (who was the Capital Seed, to whom the Promise was made) was made the Minister of the *Legal Circumcision* : (He was the Angel that spake with *Moses* in the Wilderness, or that gave the Law ; and *He*, in the Days of his Flesh, but preached to the *Jews*.) It was for the Truth of *God*, to Confirm the Promises to the Fathers ; for so saith the Apostle, *Rom. 15. 8. Now I say, that Jesus Christ was the Minister of the Circumcision, for the Truth of God, to confirm the Promises unto the Fathers.* I say, for *This* Reason, as also (which is an Amplification of it) perhaps to shew, that there was no Salvation and Inheritance by the Works of the Law, Circumcision, which had been the Sign and Token of the Promise made to *Abraham*, was taken and applied to be the Sign and Token of the *Legal Covenant*, which came
by.

by *Moses*; to *Become* which indeed by the (capable) Ceremoniality of it in some respects, [not as it was a Sign of the Covenant; for there is nothing like a Ceremony in being but that, but as it was confined to one Sex, and (in the Execution and Performance of it) to a certain Day] it was very *Proper* and *Fit*. The Reason, I say, it was applied to the Legal Covenant, besides the *Fitness* of it, was for the Truth of *God*, to *Confirm*; and not either to *Destroy* or *Alter* the Promise made unto the Fathers; *God* taking the *Token* of the Covenant of Promise, and putting it upon the Legal Covenant, to be a Sign of it, to shew he had his Covenant of Promise still in Remembrance: For *Doing so*, He could never look on, or so much as think on the Law, but He must also remember the Promise; the Sign and Memorial of the Promise being thus annexed, and put to the Law.

[Thus Circumcision, the first Sign and Token of *Abraham's* Covenant, though it were *Adopted* into the Law of *Moses*, and made a Sign and Token of that Covenant in which he Mediated; it was so but for the same Reason, that *Jesus Christ* himself was made the Minister of it: That is, not in *Derogation* of the Promises made to *Abraham*, and his Seed, or of any Priviledges, and Duties

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Duties and Incumbencies arising from *Them*,
 out in *Confirmation* (of them.) *It was for*
be Faith of God, to confirm the Promises to
be Fathers. And therefore, though as
Adopted into the Law of *Moses*, and made
 a Part and Member thereof, it must conse-
 quently be annulled, and cease therewith;
 yet, seeing that Adoption of it into the
 Law was in Confirmation of the Promise,
 the Abrogation and Cessation of *Circumci-*
ion with the Law, as now become a Part
 of it, cannot be understood to be in any
 Diminution of the Promise; *It not ceasing*
as it was a Sign and Token of the Promise,
but as it was become a Member and Part of
the Law.]

—And so much in Demonstration of the
 Third Particular, (*viz.*) *That the Duty*
and Incumbence to which Abraham (and the
same is said of his Seed) was obliged, as
being in Covenant, was, by way of Restipula-
tion, to dedicate and give Himself, and all
His to God; and, in token of that Dedicat-
ion of himself, and of all his, to put the Sign
and Token of the Covenant, as the Cogni-
zance, and Mark, and Badge of God upon
all his, as well as to wear it himself.

It now remaineth, that I manifest what
 I promised to do in the Last place, (*viz.*)
That from Abraham's Gift and Dedication
 of

of Himself and His to God, there arises a
 1 Distinction of Holiness into Internal and Ex-
ternal; the Former positive and absolute, the
 1 Latter relative: And that this Distinction
 is Evangelical, and as applicable unto our
 Times since the Law, as to the Times before
 it, and under it.

That from the *Double Dedication* the
 Covenant of Promise obliges to, and which
 Abraham practised, there arises such a *Di-*
stinction of Holiness, is evident; for to be
 Holy, being to be Separated or Dedicated
 to God, as He is a God in Covenant: [For
 whether it be a Person, or it be a People,
 that is Holy, still to be Holy is to be De-
 1 *dedicated, to be Separated, it is to Be to the*
Lord their God; Deut. 14. 21. *Thou art*
an Holy People unto the Lord thy God:
 For a People to be *Unto the Lord their God*,
 is to be Holy; for as to be Blessed or Hap-
 py, the Lord must be a People's; so to be
 Holy, they must be the Lord's.] And See-
 1 *ing also, that a Person may be Separated*
and Dedicated to the Lord, and so become
His as He is a God in Covenant, either by
 a Separation and Dedication, which is the
 1 Persons Own Act; as when Abraham or any
 other doth devote and give himself unfeign-
 edly and cordially to God; or else he may
 1 *be so By a Dedication and Separation pro-*
 ceeding

ceeding from *Another's Act*, and not his own; he being another's, and consequently capable of being given and devoted by him.

This being so, *What* can be clearer than that there are *Two Kinds* of *Holiness*; of which, the *Former* (wherein the Person himself is Active, and doth dedicate and give himself) is *Positive*: Internal, and Saving: the *Latter*, (in which he is Passive, and is but dedicated, assigned, and given by another, whose he is) is *External* and *Relative*; not a Holiness in the Person, but a Holiness upon him. With the *Former* kind of Holiness, *Abraham* himself was Holy; but with the *Latter*, his *Infant Children*, and *Servants*: Who, to shew that they were *Gods*, had the *Mark of God* upon them; as ours, to shew that they are *So*, have his Name.

And that this *Distinction* of Holiness into *External* and *Internal*, *Positive* and *Relative*, a Holiness that is saving, and a Holiness that is not, hath *Place in Gospel-times*, is as evident as that it had *One* under the *Law*, and before the *Law*: To manifest which, I will remind you of a *Text* that hath been much in discourse, and on which, for obvious Reasons, I will a little insist: It is *1 Cor. 7. 14.* For the unbelieving Husband

1 *band is sanctified by or in the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by or in the Husband.* Where note, One Person being *Sanctified*, but not being *Saved* by the relation which it hath to another, it can
 1 only be *So Externally*: The Believer is a *Saint*, and so Internally holy; but the Unbeliever is but *Sanctified* or Sacred, (and that not as a Person, a Man or a Woman,
 1 but as a Person in such a Relation, as a Husband or Wife) by the relation which he hath to that: So *Athanasius* makes, or rather notes the Distinction.

1 The Design and Scope of the Apostle in the Text, is to satisfy a *Case of Conscience*, which, it seemeth, had been proposed to him; and was, Whether the Bond of Marriage contracted between Persons, both at the Time of that Contraction, in a state of Infidelity, were obliging afterward, if one of them became a *Convert*? Or, Whether the believing Husband were not obliged to put away the unbelieving Wife, and the believing Wife to leave her Husband that believed not; seeing the Apostle (for this likely was the Occasion) had advised them in a former Epistle, not to keep company with idolaters and prophane Persons; and they comprehended not how
Then a Believer, a Holy Person, could hold
 Com-

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Communion in the Matrimonial State with an Unbeliever, who is an Idolater and unholy.

This was the *Case*; and to this the Apostle gives a plain and positive *Resolution*, Vers. 12, 13. *But to the rest speak I, not the Lord; If any Brother hath a Wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away; and the Woman which hath an Husband that believeth not, if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.* Then he seconds the Resolution and Decision which he had made, with a *Reason* that doth expressly obviate the *Ground* and *Foundation* of their *Scruple*, and that in the former Part of the 14th Vers. *For the unbelieving Husband is sanctified in or by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified in or by the Husband.* In fine, he *Fortifies* that Reason by a further Consideration, taken from the Inconvenience and Absurdity that else would follow, if it should not be as he affirmed; and that in the latter Part of the 14th Vers. *Else your Children are (or would be) unclean; but now (or whereas) they are holy.*

The Sense *You* give of the Apostles *Reason*, (for of his *Resolution* and Decision I know no Controversie) is; “That the
“*Bond of Matrimony still remains: Reli-*
D 2 “*gion*

" gion makes no Alteration in *Civil Bonds*
 " and Contracts. The unbelieving Hus-
 " band is as much clean or lawful, that is
 " (*say you*) sanctified to the Use of the be-
 " lieving Wife; so that she may now as
 " freely admit his Conversation in a Conju-
 " gal way, as ever before: And the like
 " of the unbelieving Wife to the belie-
 " ving Husband. For were it otherwise,
 " your Children must be *Illegitimate*, and
 " Bastards; whereas they are not so, but
 " *Lawfully Begotten*, and of clean Blood.

" For this Sense, you argue from divers
 " Considerations: *One* is, That the Holi-
 " ness of the unbelieving Parents must be of
 " the *same Kind* with that of the Children,
 " and that of the Children the same with
 " that of the unbelieving Parents; and
 " therefore, can be only *Civil*. Another;
 " That the Apostle, when he saith, *The*
 " *unbelieving Husband is sanctified*, doth not
 " say by the *Believing* Wife, but only by
 " the *Wife*; and when the unbelieving
 " Wife is sanctified, he saith not by the
 " *Believing* Husband, but only by the *Huf-*
 " *band*: Which sheweth, that the Holi-
 " ness is only by the *Conjugal Relation*, as
 " one is a Husband, the other a Wife; not
 " as a believing Husband, or believing
 " *Wife*. And the *Third* is, That in *Mal.*

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“ 2. 15. the word *Holy* is taken for Legitimate and Lawful.

But for all this, the *Sense* you give of the Apostle's Reason, can never be *His*, as being altogether incongruous, and improper to the words he uses: For whereas the Apostle says, *The unbelieving Husband is sanctified in or by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified in or by the Husband*; instead of sanctified *In* or *By*, you render it sanctified *To*; both *Against* the common use of the Particle, and *Without* Example. For *Gal.* 1. 16. the Text you cite as Parallel, must be rendred (as it is in our Translation) *In me*: It had been a *Solacisme*, to have said there, *ἐν ἐμοὶ* for *To me*; it must have been ἀποκαλύψαι ἐμοὶ; answerably to that *Matth* 16. 17. *Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it to thee, ἐν δὲ πνεύματι λέγει σοι.* not *ἐν σοι*. And for *Acts* 4. 12. the other (*non Parel*) Parallel you cite, *ἐν πανθρώποις* there, is not *To Men*, but *Among Men*; *No other Name is given among Men*: No other Name, no other Person among the Sons of Men; No Name among all their Names; not *Moses*, not *Herod*, &c. is the Name or Person given of *God*, in and by which they can be saved; and yet if it were used in construction with *Any other*

ther word for *To*, (as indeed I find it with *ἐπεσυνήκατε*, 2 Pet. 1. 5. of which see *Beza ad Loc.*) it would not follow, that it might be used in that Sense with *ἡγιασας*, if you do not bring (as you do not) an *Example* of it. In the Sense you carry it, *ἡγιασας* in the Text, should have been construed with either *οὗς* or *εἰς* (not *ἐν*), as it is *Heb. 9. 13.*

Again, How is the Unbeliever *Legitimated* in or by the Believer? Both are equal in respect of Conjugal Relation; one doth not legitimate another, but the *Law* of Nature or Nations legitimates them both to one another. But here, the Apostle saith, *The unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the Husband*; and therefore, to be Sanctified, is not to be Legitimated. And observe, It is the *Unbeliever* is sanctified by the *Believer*: He saith not, The Believer is sanctified by the Unbeliever; whereas, if to be Sanctified be to be Legitimated, both are equally Sanctified by, or rather to one another.

But say you; "It is not said by the Apostle, That the unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the *Believing* Wife, nor that the unbelieving Wife is so by the *Believing* Husband: He saith, barely, By
" the

“ the Wife, and by the Husband; not by
 “ the believing Wife, and by the belie-
 “ ving Husband. As if it were not plain-
 ly understood, when he saith of a Husband
 and Wife, of which it is supposed one is
 a Christian, a Believer; the other not;
 That the unbelieving Husband is sanctified
 by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is
 sanctified by the Husband. Certainly, it is
 the Unbeliever is sanctified by the Believer;
 especially seeing this Wife, and this Hus-
 band, *Vers. 15.* is called the one a Sister,
 the other a Brother: And also, that in some
 Copies, particularly that of *Claremont*, Be-
 lieving is added, as *Beza* assures; and so
Tertullian also, and *Athanasius*, read it.

Again, in all the Scripture, the term *San-
 ctified* is never put for *Civilly Legitimated*;
 and you might as well have said, it signifieth
Nothing, as that it signifies but *That*: For
 as for *Mal. 2. 15.* the term *Holy* is not in
 the Text; for it is not there a Holy Seed,
 but a Seed of God, and that according to
 the Usage of the *Hebrews*, who put the
 Name of God to what excels; as a Moun-
 tain of God for a High Mountain, an Army
 of God for a Great Army, a Lyon of God
 for a Lyon that excels in Strength or Sta-
 ture; and so a Seed of God for an honoura-
 ble excellent Seed; a Seed not basely, pro-

miscuously or adulterously begotten; but according to the Law and Institution of *God*, in lawful and orderly Matrimony: And if the Seed of *God* be an Honourable, Excellent, and Legitimate Seed; will it therefore follow, that the word *Holy* (a word the Prophet uses not) doth signifie Lawful or Legitimate?

And whereas you say, ["The Seed of
 " *God* can be understood in no other Sense,
 " but that of a *Lawful* Seed, in opposition
 " to *That* born in *Poligamy*; and so con-
 " clude against *Poligamy* from that Text:]
 I cannot but observe, that you will take for sufficient *Evidence*, in some Points, *That* which is not currant even with you in others. For is not this an *Old-Testament* Text, as well as *Gen. 17*? and yet suffices to conclude against *Poligamy*, *Though* the latter must not for Baptism. And *tho'* more is to be said against the Illation you make from the *One*, than can against *That* I make from the *Other*. For the *Seed of God*, in the Text, is not literally and directly opposed to the Issue born in *Any* *Poligamy*, but in *Adulterous* *Poligamy*; for words must be interpreted according to the Scope and Subject-matter: and the Design and Scope of *the Prophet*, is not to argue against *Poligamy* as such, in which there may be no Treachery;

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ry; but against Adulterous Poligamy, in which there always *Is*; it being founded in Treacherous putting away: Which is evident, in that the Prophet concludeth not against the *Former*, but the *Latter*; *Therefore, take heed to your Spirit; let none deal treacherously against the Wife of his Youth. Deal treacherously!* Wherein? In Poligamy as such? No; but in the Divorce, then, commonly in Practice; which was, to put away one Wife to take another: or in (as I called it) Adulterous Poligamy, Poligamy founded on unjust *Divorce*: For saith he, *The Lord the God of Israel, he hateth putting away.* Plainly, the Treachery lay not barely in Poligamy, or the having many Wives; for to say it did, is great Impiety against the Father of the Faithful, and against the Generation of the Just: For did *Abraham* deal treacherously? or did *Jacob*? or did *David*, but in the Matter of *Uriah*? &c. Was the Church, the true Off-spring of *God*, founded in an Ungodly Seed? Were not the *Patriarchs* the Issue of Poligamy? Or can it be imagined, that the Father of the Faithful, the Man after *God's* own Heart, and the Father of the Twelve *Patriarchs*, should live and die in Treachery, Perjury, Adultery? And yet they did in Poligamy: No, the Treachery

ry lay not simply in *Poligamy*, or having many Wives ; but, as I said, in *Adulterous Poligamy*, or the *Divorce* then in Practice, which was, the *Cruel putting away of one Wife, to take another* : For this, as *Christ* explains it, is *Adultery* ; and consequently, Treachery against the Divorced.

And if the *Conclusion* be against Divorce, that Divorce which was in Practice in that time, the *Medium* or Argument by which he doth deduce it, must be understood *Accordingly* : And what is the *Medium* ? *God made One*, when the Remainder of the Spirit was with Him, and He could have made more : And why then but One, but that He might have an Excellent Seed ; which, in direct and literal Correspondence to the Conclusion, [*Therefore deal not treacherously, in putting away,*] must be *Thus* Interpreted : He made *One* ; but One, that He might have an excellent Seed ; not a base, dishonourable Seed, the Issue of Adultery and treacherous Divorce ; but an honourable, orderly Seed, according to his own Ordinance and Institution of Marriage : And therefore, He made One ; but One, that there being but One (All,) *Adam* might have no *Choice* of more, and consequently might be incapable of committing Treachery against That One he had,

in

in putting her away to take *Another*.

This is plainly the Reasoning of the *Prophet*. But though from this *Medium* he but argues, and so doth *Jesus Christ* too, against *Adulterous Divorce*; yet seeing the same *Medium* may be used to more than one Conclusion, I do not lay any Imputation on your Argument against Poligamy, from the Prophet's, *That God made but One*; and consequently, *Adam* could not have more than One: No, though it may be said, That the Argument would hold as well against *Successive*, as *Contemporal* Poligamy: For there being but one Woman (all) made, *Adam* could no more have one after another, than two at once: And though the Holy *Patriarchs* understood it not to be against Poligamy, which they practised; but against *Adulterous Divorce*, which they never practised.

I hope, you will not understand me here beside my Intentions, to offer what I *Have* in favour of Poligamy: I know that from the Beginning it was not so; it could not be so; and that the Churches of *Christ* have no such Custom: I only offer it, to let you see, how *Just* you are to the *Old Testament*, and to Consequences and Deductions in Matters in which you have no Prejudice; and again, how *Hard* in things in which you

you have *Any* : Seeing a *Well-laid Consequence* and Deduction, from an *Old-Testament* Text, shall render you Impregnable in *One Case*, against the Battery of many not unworthy Considerations ; *But* shall not signify a Button in *Another*, though the Considerations against *It* are in no Degree so numerous, or so weighty : As if *For* you, any Probability and Appearance must be Demonstration ; but *Against* you, even Demonstrations as good as the Nature of the thing will bear, must not have the Reputation of being bare Probabilities. But This by the way. To return.

The Sense I have of the Apostle's *Resolution*, and of the *Reason* with which he enforces it, is, That notwithstanding the Infidelity and Unbelief of one of the Conjugal Pair ; (yet) the other might still cohabit, and Conjugally converse with him, or with her : For though the Person of the Unbeliever be not sanctified ; yet the Relation is, and the Matrimonial use is, and that in and by the Faith of the Believer ; who, by a Dedication of himself, or of her self, and of all he doth, and all he useth, in receiving all, and doing all with giving of Thanks, and with a *Superior Reference*, doth thereby *sanctify*, make different and holy. (namely, *Relatively* and *Externally*) what with-

out

out that Dedication and Superiour Reference, was in it self but *Common*, Indifferent, and Unclean: As 1 *Tim.* 4. 3, 4, 5. where mark the *Limitation*; *To him that Believeth*: and also the *Manner* how sanctified; *By the Word and Prayer*.

And the Apostle enforceth this Reason; namely, the *Sanctification of the Unbeliever in and by the Believer*, as to Conjugal Acts and Uses, by a further Consideration, *viz.* That (there being the same Reason for the Unbelieving Parent, as for the Children that do not Actually believe) if it were not *So*, [If the Unbelieving Husband, as a Husband, were not sanctified by the believing Wife, but remained *Common, &c.*] then their *Children* (which they would not easily grant) must be also common, and unclean, and as unholy as the Children of the meer *Heathen*; who, being Aliens to the Commonwealth of *Israel*, Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, and so without *God* as in Covenant, *Can* do no Act in reference to him; that is, no Holy Action; and consequently, tho' they might *Lawfully* (both by the Law of Nature, and the Law of Nations) beget *Children*, which therefore would be Legitimate; yet they could not do it *Holyly*, and therefore their Children could, not be Holy. A Heathen may do a thing
Law

Lawfully; but only a Christian can do a thing *Holily*: That is *Lawfully* done, which is done according to Law, Civil or Divine, Natural or Positive; but that only is *Holily* done, which being Lawful, is done with *Reference to God in Covenant*, and for his Glory. And as Children are called *Legitimate*, as they are lawfully begotten; so they are called *Holy*, as being *Holily* begotten. Thus it is, as if the Apostle had said, If the Unbelieving Husband be not Sanctified by the Believing Wife, and the Unbelieving Wife by the Husband that believeth; then are your Children still Unholy, still Unsanctified, and but as the Children of meer *Heathens*: For if your Children are Holy and *Sanctified*, (as you do acknowledge them) they be So but by the Dedication of the believing Parent by Word and Prayer, with a Relative and External Sanctity. And Thus the unbelieving Wife May be sanctified, and Is by the Husband that believeth; and Thus the unbelieving Husband is *Sanctified* by the believing Wife, as well as your Children: every Believer *Sanctifying*, Dedicating, and Consecrating all he hath Concern in or with, by Prayer applying the Word: *Else were your Children common and unclean; whereas now they are Holy.* Designati Sanctitatis, saith

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saith *Tertullian*, the Candidates of Holiness. And thus the unbelieving Husband and Wife (as Husband and Wife) are holy, as the Children are holy, with a *Relative* and *External* Holiness, one and the same sort of Holiness.

And whereas you think, "That in the Gospel-Administration there is no such thing as a *Relative* and *External* Holiness;"] I on the contrary am apt to think, there was never *More*; and that the Ceremonial Holiness under the Law, did in a great degree but signify the Latitude of *This* in the Gospel: For what is the *Holiness* of our Actions, Natural or Civil, and of the Members of our Bodies; and *That* which is on Creatures by *craving* a Blessing on them, Other than a *Reference* (in the doing of the Former, and in the using of the Latter) to the Glory of God? In this *ἀναφορά ἐς Θεόν*, this Reference to God in *Actions*. in the use of *Creatures*, and the use of our *Members*, consists the *Sanctification* of *Them*, to *Which* in all things a Believer is obliged: For *Whether we do eat, or do drink, or what-ever we do, all must be done* (with this Reference to God,) *for the Glory of God*. Thus a Christian is a Person that is *Entirely* to God; that in all he *Is*, and *Has*, and *Doth*, is *To*, and *For* God: He is a Priest, and he

1 is an *Offering*, and he is a *Temple* too: So that, now, Holiness is on the Bells of the *Horses*, and the *Pots* (Vessels of common Use) are as the *Bowls* before the Altar; all Holy and Consecrated. No Action of a Believer, much less his Marrying, and giving in Marriage, and the consequent Actions of that State, must be common, but holy; and every Action of an Unbeliever, is common and unholy: *To the Pure all things are Pure, but to the Unbeliever nothing so*: Even the Lawful Actions of the Unbeliever, who is without God in the World, are unholy. Holy Christian Matrimony, and holy Christian Use of one another, differs much from Unholy and Unchristian. Infidels do *Lawfully* come together; but they do not *Holily*: They never think on God in Covenant in it.

1 Now, in your second Thoughts, I pray consider, which of the given Senses is the most probable, either *That* which agreeth not to the Text, so much as in the Grammar; but is far fetcht, violent, and forced: or *That* which is not only Natural and Genuine, without Constraint and Violence to the words; but also agreeth both to the Analogy of Faith, and to the Design of the *Apostle*: As which not only resolves the Case *proposed*; but, by obviating the Ground
of

of the Scruple, doth fully satisfie the Conscience : A Sense not mean and low, as that is which makes the Holiness to be but Civil, (to be) a meer Lawfulness ; but a High, Lofty, Spiritual, Evangelical Sense : a Sense truly worthy of our great Apostle, who breatheth nothing but Sanctity, nothing but Holiness.

Thus having fortified my Premises, I should immediately proceed to deduce my Conclusion ; but (that) before I do so, it may not be amiss to consider one *Question* ; which is : [*Why, Seeing the Sign and Token of the Covenant of Promise, was the Sign and Token of it not only on Abraham's Part, to whom it was made ; but on God's, who made it : Why, since it signified, that God did convey, and make Himself and all His to Abraham, as well as that Abraham ought to restitulate, and surrender, and make himself, and all his again to God : That all along I do mention but This, and not the Other ?*]

To *This* I answer, That I insist not on the *Latter*, to exclude the *Former*. I well know the Sign and Token of the Covenant, to be a Sign and Token between God and Abraham ; and so as much signifie what God hath promised to Abraham, as what Abraham was obliged to answer. But the

E Reason

Reason I insist *mainly* on the *Latter*, is, That *It* seemeth mostly (to be) imported in *Putting of the Sign upon Abraham*: For any other Sign that *God* had pleased to have given him, either in the Heavens above, or in the Earth below, might have been (as the Bow in the Clouds) a Confirmation of the Truth of *God*, as Covenanting: But it *Would not*, with so much Clearness and Significance, have represented *Abraham's* Stipulation, and his assigning and giving of himself and his again to *God*, as *Now* it doth; seeing (that) That in common Sense is *God's*, which hath his Sign upon it, and wears his Mark. And 'tis as observable, that as Circumcision was upon *Abraham*, and on all his, in token of his Answer and Restipulation to *God*, (That he did dedicate and assign himself, and all he had, to him); so Baptism [the Evangelical, initiating Token] is on the Person *too* to whom *God* is a *God*, and signifieth the *same* Restipulation and Answer, which Circumcision did: The *Which* many Learned (not improbably) conceive the Apostle means, when he says, 1 Pet. 3. 21. That Baptism is *Not the putting away of the Filthiness of the Flesh, but the Answer or Restipulation of a good Conscience towards God*: And so *Beza* (*ad loc.*) on second Thoughts doth render it; and *Tertullian* happily

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happily doth allude to it too, when *l. de Resur. Car.* he tells us, *Anima non Lavatione, sed Responsione sancitur.* Besides, *ἰνερρωτιμα* is a Juridical word, as may be seen in the Glossary: And though (in Classick Authors) *It* primarily, and in the First place, do signifie *Interrogation*; yet even *thence*, it came in the Second to signifie *Stipulation*, (the Sense the Jurists take it in:) And the Reason is evident; for in *Spigelius*, *Stipulatio est firma verborum conceptio, quâ quis Aliquid se facturum daturumve promittit Alteri super hoc Ipsum Interroganti; utpote, promittis mihi te daturum xx Philippeos? Alter Respondebat, promitto.* And Thus also *Surrenders* and *Deditions* were antiently made, as is to be seen (in *Livy*, *l. 1. c. 36.* and in *Calepine, ad voc. ded.* out of him) in the Dedition of the *Collatines* to the *Romans*. But yet my Argument doth not stand and fall with the Sense of this Text, no more than with that in the *1 Cor. 7.*

Well then, I have evinced, That the Covenant of Promise, which is the Blessing of *Abraham*, is the Covenant of Grace, and That it doth descend upon the (true) Believing *Gentiles*; I have also evinced, That all who have the Benefit and Advantage of the Blessing of *Abraham*; and are the Seed

on whom it doth descend, are equally obliged to the Duty, Office, and Incumbence arising from the Nature of that Blessing, or annexed to it, as *Abraham* himself: And I have evinced, That the Duty, Office, and Incumbence arising from the Blessing of *Abraham*, in the Covenant of Promise, was, in Restipulation and Answer to *God*, to dedicate, assign, and give himself, and all he owned, to Him; and, in token of that Dedication, Gift, and Assignment, to put the Sign and Token of the Covenant [the Mark and Cognizance of *God*] both on himself, and on them.

And now take my *Argument*, which is this: That *Seeing* the Believing *Gentiles* are the Seed of *Abraham*, and consequently are Partakers of his Blessing in that Covenant of Promise confirmed afore in *Christ*; as is evident in the first Particular: And *Seeing* the Seed of *Abraham*, who are Partakers of his Blessing, are under equal Obligation to the Duty, Office, and Incumbence of that Blessing, as *Abraham* himself was; which is the Second Particular: And *Seeing* also, That the Duty, Office, and Incumbence lying on *Abraham*, as he had the Blessing, was, that he should both dedicate, and assign, and give himself, and all his to *God*; and, in token of it, take himself,

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self, and put on them the Sign of the Covenant, (which is called to keep the Covenant, *viz.* in the Sign of it;) which is the Third. It *Follows*, That the true Believing *Gentiles*, who are the Seed of *Abraham*, and as much Partakers of the Blessing in the Covenant of Promise, as *Abraham* himself, are as much obliged to observe and keep that Covenant of Promise, in the Sign and Token of it, (be it what it will) as he himself, and his Natural Seed: That is, in plain words, Seeing *God* is as much a *God* to the Believing *Gentiles*, as he was to *Abraham*, and doth as much give and make himself, and all he hath to them, as he did to him; It follows, That they are as much obliged, by way of Answer, to dedicate and give themselves, and all they have, to him; and, in token of it, to take the Sign of the Covenant between *God* and Them, or the Cognizance and Token of being *God's*, (which *Now* is Baptism) upon *Themselves*, and to put it upon all *Theirs*, ~~capable~~ (and to be sure, their Children are *Theirs*) as *Abraham* was *Himself* to take Circumcision, (the Sign and Token of the Covenant *Then*) and to put it also on *His*. The same Reason for both; The *Seed* is as well to keep the Covenant (in the Sign,) as *Abraham*.

If it could be denied, that Baptism is now the Sign and Token of the Covenant of Grace, as Circumcision was heretofore; I should think it easie to be evinced: But I assume it as granted, and that both *Because* Baptism is the Restipulation and Answer of a good Conscience to *God*; and *Because* it hath the same Use now, that Circumcision had before, (*viz.*) To be the Rite of Matriculation, and of Assignment: And *Because* else (which is hard to think) there is now no such Sign and Token at all of the Covenant: Whereas if in Circumcision, (*God's Sign*); in Baptism, the Name of *God* is put upon us, to mark us for *His*. And taking it for granted, and allowing the Grounds that I have laid, you may see the Reason, why in the Primitive Times, *Whole Houses* were Baptized: It is on the same Account, and for the same Reason, that *Abraham's Whole House* was Circumcized. Thus it is said, *Act. 11. 14.* That *Peter* should tell *Cornelius* words, by which he and all his House should be saved: And *Act. 16. 15.* it is said but of *Lydia*, that she believed; but of Her, and of her Household, that they were Baptized: And in *Act. 16. 31.* it is promised to the *Goaler*, that on his Faith not only himself, but his Household should be saved: Believe thou

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on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House. And 1 Cor. 1. 16. Paul Baptized the Household of Stephanas: And Christ himself tells *Zachew*, on his believing, That Salvation is come not to his Person only, but his *House*. I say not; this is Demonstration; but it seemeth something; that (ordinarily) when the *Master*, on his believing, hath a Blessing given him, his *House* or Family should be joyned with him. Certainly, the Families of the *Seed* have the same Relation to them, that the Family and Household of *Abraham* had to him; and the Incumbence on the Seed, is the same as on *Abraham*; and the Privilege the same.

And it seems to me, to answer exactly to the Sentiments of *Some*, concerning the Promise given to the Church under the *Messiah*, that *Magnificent One*; for so *Jer.* 30. 21. should be rendred, and not in the Plural, as we do read it: To the Letter, it is not their Nobles, as in our Translation; but *their Magnificent One*, or *their Noble One shall be of themselves; and their Honour shall proceed from the midst of them.*

Now say *They*, the Promise is, That when this Noble and Magnificent One, the *Shiloe* should come out of the Loyns of *Juda*, and take the Sovereign Government
and

and Power, and have the chief Administration of things in his own Hand ; *Then*, in that Glorious and Evangelical Dispensation, *their Children should be as afore-time*; or to the Letter, *As of Old* ; Their Children should be solemnly dedicated, and given up to God, and put into his Protection and Care ; and, in token of it, be Baptized, as of old, in afore-time, they were Circumcized : Which, though it be not the proper Sense of that Text, (*for of Old* may look but to the *Time* of *David* and *Solomon*, as I am apt to think it doth, because the same word is *Neb.* 12. 46. used in Reference to *It* ;) yet it is consonant enough to the Analogy of Faith.

For indeed, well may Children in the Gospel-Dispensation be said, in this Sense, to be as *afore-time*, and as of old ; since though the *Jews* are cut off, the *Gentiles* (which believe) are grafted in upon the same *Stock* ; not indeed upon the Legal *Branch*, but upon the *Root Olive* ; which affordeth all the Nourishment that either the *Jews* had, or the *Gentiles* have : Which *Root-Olive* is the *Covenant of Promise* ; that *Covenant*, that *Promise*, that was above Four hundred Years before the Law, *Now*, into that *State* of things, as the *Covenant of Promise* *Then* held it so long before

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fore the Law, we believing *Gentiles*, the true Seed, are put : *Christ* himself affirming, That *Mary* shall come from the East, and from the West, the North, and the South, [and those are the believing *Gentiles* from all Quarters,] and shall sit down with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* : He saith not with *Moses*, and with *Elias*, by whom the Law came, and was explained ; but with the *Fathers*, who received the Promise : They shall sit with these in the Kingdom of Heaven, or Gospel - Church, And in That State of things, when not the Law, but the Gospel preached unto *Abraham*, did obtain ; God was a God not only to the Father, but in and through the Father, and for his Sake to the Children, yea, to all the Family ; and the Father of the Family did not only dedicate and give himself, but all His, his Children, and even his Servants, all his to God. And so it is Now : Our Children are Thus, as they were afore-time, or of old ; else indeed our Children were unclean, but now are they Holy ; they are God's. The great Mistake of Antipedo-¹ baptists, is, That they look not back but to the Law, when they should (look back) ¹ a little further, even to the Time of the Promise, before the Law ; a State of things for the long space of four hundred and thir-⁷

ty Years: For observe, in *Jer.* 31. from *Vers.* 31 to 34. when *God* is pleased to promise to make a New Covenant, and consequently to abolish and abrogate the Old, he maketh old *not that* Covenant made with *Abraham* four hundred and thirty Years before the Law; *but that* which was made with their Fathers, *In the Day he took them by the Hand to bring them out of the Land of Egypt*; which was the Legal Covenant made on Mount *Sinai*. "Certainly, the New Covenant, as stated in *Jeremy*, is a *Renovation* of *Abraham's*, or of the Promise of the Spirit; *I will be their God, they shall be my People; I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed; and Thou and thy Seed shalt keep my Covenant: To keep God's Covenant, is to be God's*:

4 As for *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, those two Figures, taking them as Figures, and as in the Allegory, so they represent not primarily and immediately; (as you apprehend them) the State of single Persons; as if the *Latter* should represent the Persons that truly, and to all intents and purposes, are Spiritual *Heirs* of the Promise; and the *Former*, those that are only so Externally, and as they did descend (according to the *Flesh*) from *Abraham*: For, if you mind it, this Distinction of Seeds did take no place,

place, in the Antitype and Truth, before the Law, for all that long space of above four hundred Years that did precede it. So that firstly, they do not signifie single Persons; but *Peoples*: I say, *Ishmael* and *Isaac* are not primarily and immediately the Elect and Reprobate, (as Elect and Reprobate are commonly taken) but are *Jew* and *Gentile*: The Seed which is of the Law; and the Seed which is of the Faith of *Abraham*: According to *Rom. 4. 16.* there are Elect: and Reprobate among both Seeds.

Yes, *Ishmael* and *Isaac* do signifie but Peoples; (namely,) *Ishmael* signifies the *Jews*; who, being Descendants of *Abraham* according to the Flesh, were under the Bondage of the Law; and so, in the Mystery, were Children of *Hagar* the Bond-Woman, as *Ishmael* was in the Letter: For *Hagar* answereth unto *Sinai*, where the Law was given: And *Isaac* represents the believing *Gentiles*; who are no longer under the Bondage of the Law, but under the Grace of the Promise; and so, in the Mystery, are the Children of *Sarah*, or of the Free Woman; as being the Children of the Faith of *Abraham*, as Others were of his Body. *Hagar* and *Sarah* are the Two *Covenants* and *Dispensations*, [*Sinai* and *Sion*;

Sion;] and the *Jews* under the Law, and *Gentiles* under the Gospel, are the *Children* of *Them*, or *Ishmael* and *Isaac*. So that before the Law, no Distinction in the Anti-type or Mystery of those Two; for the Children could not be, before the Mothers were: And therefore, what is this to the State of the Promise four hundred and thirty Years before? Now, in the Gospel being freed from the Law, we are put again into the State of the Promise, which was before; *Christ* the Seed, the Principal Object of the Promise, being now come. *I'll be a God to Thee, and thy Seed.*

Thus I have finished my Argument: But happily, in Evasion of it, (for it cannot be in Solution of, or Satisfaction to it) you will persist to say, as you have already;
 “ That the External *Administration* of the
 “ Covenant now, being vastly *different* from
 “ what it was in *Abraham's* Time; there-
 “ fore the Incumbence is *so* also: And that
 “ therefore, though believing *Gentiles*, who
 “ have the Benefit of *Abraham's* Covenant,
 “ and to whom it is made, are under equal
 “ Obligation to that *Proper Duty* and *Ser-*
 “ *vice*, which is *Now* required of them, as
 “ *Abraham* was to *His*; yet it follows not,
 “ that their Infant-Seed are under the same
 “ Obligation, according to the Gospel-In-
 “ stitution,

“stitution, till put into the same Capacity
 “(by believing) with themselves.

But how pertinently this is said, I do not see: For to what Proposition in my Argument can this your Answer be adjusted and applied? Besides, it goes upon a Mistake much vaster than the Difference between the External Administration of the Covenant in *Abraham's* Time, and that in Ours: For I know no other Difference in respect of the Sign of it, but that Circumcision then *Was* that Sign, and that Baptism *Is* now. Nor will any *Difference* in the External Administration, if it should be much greater, make *Any* as to the Argument, from the Duty and Incumbence which I insisted upon, (which is, To keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, as *Abraham* did) for this Incumbence and Duty is not bot-
 tomed and grounded on the *Administration* of the Covenant, which is mutable, and doth differ; but on the *Substance* and Nature of it, which is immutable and everlastingly the same; [*I will be a God to Thee, and to thy Seed:*] And *God* being as much a *God* to the Seed of *Abraham*, as he was to *Abraham* himself; the Seed are as much obliged to the Duty, Office, and Incumbence arising and resulting from his being so, as ever *Abraham* was.

Ay, you will say ; “ The believing Gen-
 tiles, on whom the Blessing and Cove-
 nant of *Abraham* doth descend, are as
 much obliged to that *Proper Duty* and
 Service, which is *Now* required of them,
 as *Abraham* was to *His Then* ; Yet it fol-
 lows not, (I use your own words) that
 [*Their Infant-Seed are under the same*
Obligation, according to the Gospel-Insti-
tution, till put into the same Capacity (by
believing) with themselves.] And in-
 deed, it follows not, that the *Infant-Child-*
ren are under the same *Obligation* ; for
They are under *None* : The *Obligation* is
 not on the Children, which are but passive :
 But it follows well enough for the *Parents*
 that believe, that the same *Obligation* lies
 on *Them*, they being the true *Seed*, to keep
 the Covenant in the Sign of it, both by ta-
 king of it upon themselves, and by putting
 of it on their Children, that did of old up-
 on *Abraham* for himself and his. And *This*
 is the *Proper Duty* and Service required of
 them, as they are Partakers of the Bless-
 ing of *Abraham*. Nor are we to expect
 any *New* Commands in the Gospel Dispen-
 sation, for Duties settled of *Old* on lasting
 and immutable Reasons : The *Obligation*
abides, if the Reason of the Precept abides ;
 a *Principle* that is the Ground of the Apo-
 stle's

He's Reasoning, 1 Cor. 9. 8, 9, 10. And shall the Promise indeed abide, and not the Duty which arises from it? The Covenant abide, and not the Restipulation, without which it is not a Covenant? This you dare not say.

Ay, but you will tell me again; "Tho' you do acknowledge, that the Proper Duty and Incumbence arising from the Covenant, hath an Eternal Obligation upon all the true Heirs of Promise; and in particular, That such are bound by way of Restipulation, not only to assign, dedicate, and give themselves to God; but also, all that is Theirs: Yet that you do mean, that it *Must only be in the way that he himself hath appointed*, (and who, I pray, ever meant otherwise?) and that is (say you) but by *Prayer and Supplication for them*, and by *Educating* of them (as far as they are capable) in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord; and Not by the Parent's putting on them any Sign of the Covenant, as a Badge, and Cognizance of God, in Recognition and Testimony of his Right and Title to them.

But all this is but to deny the Conclusion, after Concession of the Premises; for I have evinced, that the Proper Obligation of the

the Covenant, and in the way that *God* himself hath appointed, is, That those with whom it is immediately made, and who are first Partakers of the Benefits of it, to whom *God* is firstly and immediately a *God*, are not only to dedicate and give themselves, and all they have to Him ; but to do it in this *Particular way & manner*, by keeping of the Covenant in the Sign of it ; [*I will be a God to Thee, and thy Seed ; Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, Thou and thy Seed :*] So that, to dedicate and give our Infant-Children to *God* by Prayer and Supplication, and to educate and bring them up in the

- 1 Fear and Admonition of the *Lord*, (which also must be done, and which *Abraham* also did) is not to answer the Obligation and
- 1 Incumbence of the Covenant, if we do not do it also *Solemnly*, by keeping of the Covenant in the Sign thereof our selves, and by putting of it also on *Them*. *God* loves *Solemnity* ; it makes for his External Glory : He will be *Owned* to be our Lord and Owner, and the Lord and Owner of our Children,
- 1 by our taking of his Name upon us our selves, and by putting of it on them.

And whereas you have said, with a Modesty as great as the Truth of what you say ; “ That, if my Argument be truly stated, and as (without wrestling) it ought,
 “ the

“ the proper Language of it will be this;
 “ That *Abraham* being in Covenant, was
 “ to be Circumcized both himself and *Half*
 “ his Family ; the same Covenant descends
 “ on believing *Gentiles* : Therefore, they
 “ are to be signed, and the *Whole* of theirs.
 “ But whether such an Argument as this,
 “ (This being, you say, the *True State* of
 “ the Case) be convincing or no, you re-
 “ fer to my Second Thoughts.]

I answer: That I have Reason to be at the utmost Degree of Despair, of ever receiving of any good Answers from *You*, as long as (from what Cause I now enquire not) you understand an *Argument* no better: For *Mine* (even in *Your* Terms of *Half* and *Whole*) would run thus: If *Abraham*, and all his Seed, must keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, by taking it themselves, and putting it on all theirs that are capable of it ; Then, though *Abraham*, and but *Half* his Family, (for so you compute it) did keep it in the Sign thereof, as long as Circumcision was that Sign ; yet the Seed of *Abraham*, the true Believing *Gentile*, and the *Whole* of theirs, must keep it now. Now, that Baptism is the Sign, the Sequel is evident: For as but *Half* of *Abraham's* Family was capable of Circumcision, ^{the}

the Sign of the Covenant *Then*; *All* the
 Off-spring of the Believing Seed of *Abra-*
ham, are *Capable* of Baptism, which is the
 Sign of it *Now*. And observe it; I argue
 not from Circumcision, as it is Circumcisi-
 on, to Baptism; but I argue, that because
 the Children of *Abraham*, by vertue of the
 Covenant, were signed with the Sign of it;
 which then was Circumcision: Therefore,
 the Children of the Seed, by vertue of the
 same Covenant, must be signed with the
 Sign of it too; which now is Baptism: For
 the Immediate Obligation is not to keep
 the Covenant either in Baptism, or in Cir-
 cumcision; but in the Sign of it: Now the
 Sign of *Old* was Circumcision, and the Sign
Now is Baptism. It is true, had it plea-
 sed *God* to have abolished Circumcision, the
 Sign before, and not to have instituted
 Baptism, which is the Sign now; it would
 have been a high Presumption in any Person,
 to go about to make *One*: But when the
 Covenant remains, and the *Proper* Obliga-
 tion of the Covenant, is to keep it in the
 Sign thereof; and *God*, though he hath ta-
 ken away *One Sign*, yet hath pleased to In-
 stitute *Another*; What can be plainer, than
 that as to be in Covenant is our Priviledge,
 so that to observe and keep it in the pre-
 sent Sign thereof is our Duty? Thus you
 have

have my Second Thoughts, and make the most of them.

So much by way of Obviation to what you do object to my *Argument*. I am now to reply to *Tours*; and it is *ad Hominem*: (*viz.*) “ Either the Children of Believers
“ are in Covenant with their Parents, or
“ they are not: If they are in Covenant, as
“ you say I affirm they are, because I said
“ the Children of Believers are Holy, not
“ without *God* in Covenant, but given to
“ *God* in Covenant; then say you, They
“ are the *Spiritual Seed*, and as such entitled
“ to the Covenant and Blessing of *A-*
“ *brahim*, which I formerly denied, and
“ which cannot be for fifteen Reasons. But
“ on the contrary, if I say the Children of
“ Believers are not the *Spiritual Seed* of
“ *Abraham*, and consequently such as are
“ not (*You should have added, On that Ac-*
“ *count,*) any wife intituled unto *Abra-*
“ *ham's* Covenant and Blessing; then nei-
“ ther can they justly pretend to any Co-
“ venant Holiness by Vertue of their Birth
“ Priviledge; which yet [*You say, but*
“ *Mistakingly*] I make the Ground of their
“ Admission to Baptism, when I say, That
“ *God* becometh not related unto any; nor
“ is any related unto *God* in Scripture, so
“ as to be stiled Holy, but in and through
“ the

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“ the Covenant.] Thus I am in a *Dilemma*, and driven from Corner to Corner ; but safe in none.

But pray consider, that I never said, either directly or in consequence, That the Children of Believers are *Immediately* and firstly in the Covenant of Promise, and as their Parents (are :) I only said, and still do; that they are dedicated and given by their Parents to *God*, (who is) in Covenant (with those Parents :) And yet for all this, even in my Opinion, *They* may pretend [if that must be the word] to *Some* Holiness by vertue of the Covenant of Promise ; and *This* too, though they be not *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed ; For though they be not themselves the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham* ; yet *being* the Children of those that are, they become, *thereby*, intituled to the Priviledge of being *Dedicated* and Sacred to *God*, by vertue of the Covenant ; in the *Same* Right, and all, as much as the Slaves and Natural Children of *Abraham* were. *Abraham's* Natural Children and Slaves were intituled on *His* Account ; and the Children of *Believers* are intituled on *Theirs*. The true Spiritual Seed of *Abraham* are obliged to dedicate their Children, not as *His*, but as *Theirs* ; they give *Theirs*, as he gave *His*. I pray, were not the Natural Seed
of

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of *Abraham*, and his Slaves also, *some way*¹ *Holy* in and through the *Covenant*; by virtue of the Dedication and Signing which *That* obliged to? And as *His* Children and Slaves were *some way* *Holy*, so are *Ours* also.

And in this Sense of *Federal Holiness*, as it is a *Relative* and *External Holiness*, do I ascribe it to our Children, in and through the *Covenant*; namely, as *Thus* obliges the Parent to assign and dedicate them, and they accordingly are dedicated: And to be *Federally Holy* in this Sense, they need not surely be the true Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, seeing All, even the Natural Children of *Abraham*, [though *so Holy*] were not all accounted for *Seed*. In fine; Observe, that if by virtue of the Dedication required of *Abraham* by the *Covenant* made with him, his Children were Members of the Church Then, [*Old-Testament-Church*, you call it] it will follow, that by virtue of the same *Covenant*, making the same Obligation and Incumbence of Dedication, (if *It* be still in force, as I have evinced it to be) the Children of the Seed continue Members *still*, even in the *New-Testament-Church*: And well they may, not only for that the Church is *One*, and the same, though the *Testaments*

be not ; but for that Children were not only Members of the *Jewish* or Legal Church, but of the *Gospel-Church*, for above four hundred Years before the Law : For it
 1 was Gospel that was *Preached to Abraham*, Gal. 3. 8. And therefore Circumcision was,
 1 at first, a *Gospel-Sign*. And remember, I make not the *Childrens* being in Covenant,
 1 the *Ground* of their Baptism ; but the Parents being in Covenant, the *Ground* of *Their* Holiness. To be Baptized is the Children's *Privilege* ; but it is the Parent's *Duty* to Baptize them, and to put the Name of *God* upon them, in token that by their Assignment they are His.

Well ; “ But you find not any *Mention*
 1 “ of Infants-Baptism in the Apostolical and
 “ Primitive Times ; nor any positive and
 “ literal Precept for it.] But do you find
 any mention, that the Apostles themselves,
 1 *All* of them were Baptized with *Any*, or
 1 *Any* of them with the *Baptism of Christ* ?
 Or that Women were admitted to the Supper of the *Lord* ? Or any positive literal Precept for either ? And yet, I hope, you
 1 believe, both that the Apostles were Baptized, and that Women were not excluded
 from the Holy Communion. And if you

do

do not find in so many literal Expressions, that Infants were then Baptized, you may find it in sufficient *Implication*; for you may find *Whole Houses* (of which *Ordinarily Infants* are Constituent Parts) affirmed to be so, and that frequently, and without any *Exception* of Infants; which yet ought to have been made, if it had been but for *Caution*, on supposal that it were so dangerous a thing as you would have it be thought, to understand them included. Besides, the Churches of *Christ universally* have had such a Custom, and for ought appears, *Perpetually*: Sure we are from *Immemorial Time*, which is enough to prescribe from; and you cannot but know what *Austin* says in the Case.

Now, Sir, upon the whole I pray consider, that in all the Scripture, as there is no express and positive Text, that Children must be Baptized; so there is no express and positive Text, that doth forbid their Baptizing: And therefore, it can be only consequence to Evidence, either that they ought to be Baptized, or that they ought not. And let be weighed, *That Antipedobaptism* makes the Church of *Christ* but a Church *Unim* *Ætatis*: That it robs the

Parent of a sensible Ground of Hope for his Child, in case of Decease in Infancy; which is, That he hath solemnly given him to God, and made him his Care: And *It* deprives the Child of a solemn and powerful

1 Motive, when he is of Age, to dedicate and give himself: For this is a great One;

1 [and this it deprives him of:] I am already solemnly given to God in Baptism

1 by my Parents, who had Right to give me: I am *His* by their *Dedication*, and that publickly made and attested; and therefore, I have Reason to become *so* by

1 my *Own*. I am not mine *Own*; the Name of God is upon me; I am marked for His; and I must rob God of what is His own *Already* by many Rights, and particularly by a Solemn Act of my Parents, if I now refuse my Consent, and do not also assign, and dedicate, and give my self to Him.

1 And let it *also be weighed*, That Children are no more incapable of Baptism, than they were of Circumcision: For if Baptism be the Sign and Seal of the Righteousness by Faith; so was Circumcision: *If Then* all were not *Israel*, that were of *Israel*; so it is *Now*, all in *Christ* are not *Christ*: *If Then* Circum-

cission,

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cision, which was of the Fathers, or a Sign and Token of the Promise made to *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, were taken and put unto the Law; Baptism, which was of *John*, the last Prophet, and in use before *John*, as a Rite of Initiating Proselytes, and administered both to Male and Female, *Is* taken by *Christ*, and put to the Gospel: And if Faith be made in the Gospel, the Ground and Foundation of Baptism, *Believe and be Baptized*; It was at first the Ground and Foundation of Circumcision: For *Abraham* believed God, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness; and he received the Sign of Circumcision, the Seal of the Righteousness by Faith; which he had, being yet Uncircumcized. And if the Children of *Abraham* were Holy, Ours are not Unclean.

In a word: As heretofore there were *Jews* outwardly, and but visibly, as well as inwardly and really; so now there are *Christians* outwardly, and but visibly, as well as inwardly and really. And is not Baptism it self, as external and visible a Thing as Circumcision? Yes, there is a *Baptism* and Regeneration of Wa-

ter, which is external and visible, to make Christians visibly and externally, as well as one of *the Spirit*, which is Internal and Invisible, to make real and true Christians: The *Former*, that initiates into the External and Visible Church: The *Latter*, into the true Assembly of the First Born: And the Subjects of the Two Baptisms are no more to be confounded, than the Baptisms themselves.

Thus I have given you all the Satisfaction, that under a great variety of distractive and surprizing Accidents, I was capable of giving; and I have done it with the Temper and Moderation that becomes a Seeker of Truth; without the *Common Pomp* of Figures, Insolence, and Triumph: a *Thing* scarce pardonable in the Heat and Fervency of a *Dispute*; but which doth very ill become a *Writer*. And yet, if I had used any *Warmness* in the *Argument*, seeing it is in the Case of *Infants*, that cannot speak for themselves, it had been somewhat Excusable; and the rather, for that our Saviour was so Zealous for them Himself, that when *some* (it may be of your Perswasion) would not have had them brought unto Him to
be

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be Blessed, it is said, He was much *Dis-*
pleased with *Them*. But I am not *so* with
You, for that Occasion you have given of
searching out the Truth to,

Bowdon, Septemb. 19.

81.

Jan. 27. 81.

Dear Sir,

*Your Affectionate Friend
and Servant,*

R. B.

The

The Second Letter.

Dear Sir,

YOURS of *March 16th*, came to hand the *20th*; in which the *Declaration* you begin with, That notwithstanding all that I have said, your Apprehensions concerning the Matter in dispute between us, are the same they were, and *That* rather you are the more confirmed; doth no whit surprize me. I assure you, I never had the vanity to hope, to convince a Man of your Perswasion. I was not the first Aggressor: I well knew the Confidence, that goes along with *Conceits* of higher Administrations; and I also knew, that some *Dyes* and Tinctures of Mind, (of which I took, and do take *That* of Yours to be *One*) are as incapable of being washed out, as *Those* in the Skins of Leopards and Blackamoors.

After

After a *Smoothing* Preface, you proceed to (as you call them) *Saber*, and (you hope) *Inoffensive Reflections*; which yet, to deserve the *Epithetes* you give them, must have been composed of *Ethicks*, as well as of *Logick*; must have been *Reflections* on *Arguments* only, without any squinting on *Persons*; and must have consisted of something else, than of *Ambuscadoes* of words, of bold *Assertions* without *Proof*, of *Evasions* instead of direct *Answers*, of *Partial Repetitions*, and of *Triumphs* before the *Victory*. These are the *Arts* and *Methods* of *Imposture*, used to deceive the *Vulgar*; but very improper in *Inquiries* after *Truth*; and of no *Influence*, no *Operation*, in the least, on prudent and more *Judicious Discerners*.

Your *First Reflection* is on the *Caution* which I gave you, about *mis-improving my Concession*. And here, after all the *Evasion*, *Circumlocution*, and *Wood of Words*, in which you think to hide; it is certain still, that either those *Pious and Learned Men*, who prove the *Baptism* of *Infants* from their being the *Seed* of *Abraham*, do by the *Seed* of *Abraham* mean as you and I do, or they do not; and if they do not, as you do not, you dare not say but they do not; especially your *Presbyterian Opponents*, (of
which

which I would be principally understood. Then should you raise a thousand times more Cloud and Dust than you have; still it would be visible, that all your *seven Arguments* against Infants being *Spiritual Seed of Abraham* in your Sense, my *Concession* that they are not so in *Sense*, do in no degree affect those *Excellent and Worthy Persons*: For *They* being *Spiritual Seed* in one Sense, and *I* in another; *They* for *Persons of religious Consideration*, and some way *Holy* and *You* and *I* for *Actual Believers*; tho' you may think you do oppose them, also that I do; yet indeed you do not; *I* neither: for Opposition must be *Secundum Idem*. Ay! "But (say you) the Sense in which *They* call Infants the *Spiritual Seed of Abraham*, is a Sense the Scripture knows nothing of. But, say I, Whether that be so or no, is still in question between *You*; and were it out of question, as you would have it, what were it to me, who neither did, nor do insist that Argument? But in question it is, and like to be so for all that *You*, or any *Yours* have hitherto said; nor are *I* without Scriptural Grounds. For are *the Children of Believing Parents some what Christ's*? And can they be so, and not

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Abraham's Seed? Can they be *Relatively* Holy, and Persons of a Religious Consideration, or Church-Members in the Gospel-Dispensation, (as the Reverend, most Acute, Learned, and Pious Mr. *Baxter* hath abundantly proved them,) can they be *so*, and no ways *Christ's*? Are not the Children of *Christians*, as much *Christians Externally*; as the Children of the *Jews*, were *Jews Externally*? And are there not in *Christ*, Branches that do not bring forth Fruit? That is, Are there not *Reputed* Christians, which are *so* but by External Profession, and not by Actual Faith, and Internal, True, Spiritual Regeneration? Surely, all are not *Israel*, that are of *Israel*; All are not *Christ*, that are in *Christ*. I say not *This*, as willing to insist on that *Argument*; but to evidence, with how much Justice, as well as with how great Civility, you speak by occasion of *It*, of my *Darkning Counsel without Knowledge*: And, with a Candour truly yours, and much to the purpose, add; "That a Man may make
 " a Shift, 'tis true, by means of such a Distinction, to avoid the Dint of his Adversaries Argument, in his own Conceit
 " at least; but unless the Distinction be a well-grounded Distinction he cannot pretend so much to subserve the Truth, as
 " his

"his own Credit thereby. A *Very Sober* and *Inoffensive Reflection!*

In your next, instead of *Admiration* how *Capable* comes in, you are greatly concerned that it should be thought you said, It must not be *in* in the *Major*; and therefore tell me, with some *Emotion*; "That
 "you shall only need to say, and which I
 "my self do know to be true, That you
 "did not at all *Admire* how *Capable* came
 "into my *Major* Proposition, &c. but how
 "into the *Conclusion*.] As if, had it been
so indeed, it had been a Prodigy in Logic, to have a *Term* in the *Conclusion*, that had been in one of the *Premises*. But to answer in your own *Figure* of speaking: You cannot but know, that in the Place you *Animadvert* upon, and where I used the term *Capable*, I made no *Syllogism* at all; and so distinguished not the *Major*, the *Minor*, and the *Conclusion*; but only interpreted a Text, *Gen. 17. 9, 10.* Nor is the Argument I make, to be disposed into but *One*; it doth consist of *Many Syllogisms*: and what is a *Conclusion* in one Syllogism, may (I hope) be a *Major* Proposition in another.

But you proceed: "Whereas you tell
 "me, (*say you*). That my *Admiration* is
 "more the Object of Yours; after I have
 "gran-

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“ granted, that *God* commanded *Abraham*,
 “ *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore,*
 “ *thou and thy Seed, in General Terms,*
 “ wherein *Both Sexes* may seem to be com-
 “ prehended ; you should have added, to
 “ have done well, [*As if I had not*] that
 “ which follows also, That yet it is evi-
 “ dent, that the *Males* only were to be A-
 “ ctually signed : And therefore to say,
 “ That the *Females* were *Virtually* and Re-
 “ putatively signed, in the Circumcision of
 “ the *Males*, is not to the purpose ; for
 “ according to that Rule, the *Females*
 “ should be only *Virtually* and Reputa-
 “ tively, not *Actually Baptized*. And in
 “ this Respect therefore, to say as you
 “ now do, That the putting of the Sign
 “ on all those in *Abraham’s* Family, that
 “ were capable of it ; and the wearing of
 “ it by those, may be [*I said, must be*]
 “ interpreted the putting of it on all ; can
 “ be of *no Advantage* at all, in the present
 “ Dispute.

In this Paragraph, I have again an ordi-
 nary *Instance* of your great *Candour*, and Sin-
 cerity, which will be very *Manifest*, when
 I have told you, That notwithstanding a
Sly Insinuation to the contrary, I did add,
 and that in Terms sufficiently expressive,
 more than once, that the *Males* only were
Actually

Actually signed, with Circumcision; or else, how could I argue as I did, and you grant I did, That the Females must be *understood* to be so *Reputatively*; For if the Females were signed but in *Reputation*, and Interpretation, the Males only could be *Actually* signed. And to confirm all I have now said, I need but *Repeat* the Argument I made before, which was as follows. [*But your* Admiration *is more the Object of mine*: After you have granted, that God commanded Abraham, (Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed) in General Terms; wherein, say you, Both Sexes may seem to be comprehended, (and indeed, I say, are so:) For if he did command in General Terms, that Abraham and All his (Seed, you say) should keep the Covenant, in the Sign and Token of it; and yet, afterward, did Institute Circumcision to be that Sign and Token, which [Mark this] was not competent to All. How can the Generality of the Precept, (Thou shalt put the Sign on All Thine, when Circumcision, that is not competent to All, [Mark that again] is that Sign) be understood Accommodously and conveniently, as it must be, but thus; Thou shalt put the Sign on All thine that are Capable of it; and the wearing of it by *These*, shall be interpreted and understood.

the

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the putting of it on All.] Thus, as Now, the *Gentiles* are *Counted* for Seed; so *Then,* the *Females* were *Counted* for signed. This was the *Sense* I gave, and This the Argument with which I urged it: If you approved not the *Sense*, why did you not reply to the Argument, and give a *Sense* more congruous? But if you do approve *It*, why, in your Answer, do you cloud and darken it with words, and make as if you disowned it as a *False One*? But a true *Sense* it is, you do not, you dare not deny it. Ay, but if true, you say, *It is not to the Purpose.* That, I grant, may be; not to *Your Purpose*; but sufficiently to *Mine.* “No, (say you) not to That neither; for then the *Females* should only “be reputatively Baptized, because they “were only reputatively Circumcized.] As if *Females* were not *Actually* to wear a Sign they are equally capable of with the *Males*, because they were but *Interpretatively* to wear a Sign they were not capable of but *so*.

Thus far I have followed you step by step, and written in a Fashion not mine own, but yours; both to make you sensible of the great Provokativeness, and of the as great Unfitness and Undecency of it. But I am weary of this Drudgery; and therefore,

forc, in what remains, resolve to content my self with summing up the Substance of what you offer; and that as well *without* improper Reflections, as *with* all the Clearness and Fulness I can; and so return my Answers.

The first thing offered by you of any moment, is to *This Sense*; "That the *Immediate Obligation* which was laid upon *Abraham*, and his *Seed* after him in their *Generations*, was *not* to keep the Covenant in the Sign of *It* in *General Terms*, as I would have it; *but* only to keep the Covenant in that *Particular Sign* of *Circumcision*; there being (say you) no other Sign mentioned or implied, but that *Gen. 17. 9, 10*, in which the latter words are only *Exegetical* of the former, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, &c.* in the *9th. Verse*; and *how* the *10th.* explains, namely in *Circumcision*.

And seeing this Objection hath something in it very pertinent, (for I will do you all the Right imaginable) I hold my self obliged in order to the removing of it, and consequently to the further illustrating and clearing of my Argument, to shew; First, *That the Immediate Obligation and Incumbence mentioned in the 9th. Verse, cannot be*

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to keep the Covenant in, but Circumcision; and consequently, that what is said Verse the 10th, is not meerly Exegetical of the Obligation in the 9th. Secondly, That the Immediate Obligation and Incumbence in the 9th. Verse, is to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it; this is Primary: And then, that that which is added in the 10th. Verse, is but a Secondary Institution of a Particular Sign, for that time. And, Thirdly, I will shew, That there is a plain Intimation; and consequently more than a meer hint, that some other Sign must be observed by the Seed, than that of Circumcision.

As for the First; That the Immediate, Primary Obligation and Incumbence, mentioned in the 9th. Verse, cannot be to keep the Covenant in Circumcision only; and consequently, that the 10th. is not meerly Exegetical of the 9th. is evident: For if the Primary and Immediate Obligation in the 9th. Verse, were to keep the Covenant in Circumcision, then the believing Gentile shoud be as much obliged to keep the Covenant so, as the Carnal Seed and Descendants of Abraham; seeing Those are equally at least, if not more principally comprehended in the Seed, than These.

This is evident; for the Subject of the Obligation is, in all respects, the same with

1 *That of the Promise.* [In the Promise it is, I will establish my Covenant between Me and Thee, and thy Seed after Thee, in their Generations: and in the Obligation it is; Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, Thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations:

1 The same Subject in all respects in Both.] And therefore, seeing the Subject of the Promise is, at least, as Comprehensive of the Spiritual, as of the Carnal Seed, of the Gentile that believeth, as well as of the Hebrews; the One is no more to be exempted and discharged from the Duty and Obligation, than the Other: and if Circumcision be that Duty and Obligation, Both are equally bound to submit to That.

1 All the Seed is in the Obligation, as much as in the Promise, the same words to express it; and, I hope, you will not distinguish, nor limit, where the Scripture doth not.

1 And if the Primary and Immediate Obligation of the Covenant cannot be (as you may see it cannot) to keep it in, but Circumcision; it follows, that It is to keep the Covenant in the Sign of it, in general Terms; and then, afterward, in Circumcision, to begin with, as the first Sign: So that, This must be the Sense of the Text: I will

1 Establish my Covenant between Me and Thee,

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Thee, and thy Seed ; and therefore, Thou and thy Seed shall keep my Covenant, in the Sign of it : and that Sign at first, and for the time being, the present Dispensation among *Those* that shall descend from Thee according to the Flesh, or be adjoynd to *them*, shall be Circumcision. This is a fair, a plain, and easie, and natural Sense ; a Sense, which no Exception from the Words themselves can lie against : and therefore, a Sense as much to be preferred before Yours, as that which is *Convenient*, ought to be before that which is *Not*. And This I evidenced in my former Letter, from the very *Grammar* of the Text.

But besides what I have said in my former Letter, in demonstration of the *Sense* given ; that which doth abundantly confirm it to be the *True*, is, That the *Limitation* of the Subjects in the *Particular* Obligation to Circumcision, *ver. 10, 11.* is very different from *That* in the *General* Obligation, *ver. 9.* For whereas it was said *Kors.* the 9th ; *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, Thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations ;* when he comes in the 10th. to institute Circumcision, he saith not, *This is my Covenant, which thou shalt keep, Thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations :*

But, *This is my Covenant, which you (You)*
 1 *shall keep between Me and You, and thy Seed*
after thee: And the being of it a Sign and
 1 *Token, is restrained also; And it shall be*
a Token or Sign of the Covenant between Me
 1 *and You: A Sign for this Time, and Peo-*
ple, and Administration. He saith not,
for You, and for thy Seed after thee. If you
say, I am too Critical; I say, This is a
Text that must be understood Critically:
 The Apostle was as Critical upon it as I,
 or any Man can be, when he observed, it
 is said *Seed*, as speaking of one, and not
Seeds: and what he saith, is the proper
 Key to unlock the Text.

And yet, in regard the Text hath been
 Interpreted by very few in this manner, to
 add some more Illumination to the Sense I
 make of It, I propose to be considered, that
 not only other Scriptures, but even this
 Scripture doth make *Distinction* between
 the *Family of Abraham that then was*, which
 in the Mistry represented all his *Carnal De-*
scendants, (between that) and the *Children*
of the Promise, which were afterwards to
 be; which were signified by the *Seed*, and
 afterward were typed in *Isaac* the Son of
 the Promise; it being said, *In Isaac* (not
in Ishmael, who then was) *shall thy Seed be*
called. Now, though God had said in the
 9th. Verse,

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9th. Verse, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore; that is, thou shalt keep the Sign of my Covenant; Thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations; to signify, that the Children of the Promise were obliged to that Duty and Incumbence arising from the Covenant, as well as the Children of the Flesh: Yet, when he comes to institute Circumcision in Particular, he saith of it indeed, This is my Covenant; or, This is the Sign of my Covenant: But he saith not, This is my Covenant; which Thou, Thou, and Thy Seed after thee, in their Generations, shall keep; but which Thou (You) shall keep: Thou to whom I speak. Thou Abraham, and thy Natural Household and Family Here; it is Thou, (You) and not the Seed, the Spiritual Seed: for Isaac, in whom, the Seed is called, was not there, he was yet unborn. It is Thou, (He speaks to those present;) Thou Abraham, and thy Natural Household and Family; this is the Sign of my Covenant, which Thou (You) shall keep, as a Sign of that Covenant which I have made between Me and Thou, and thy Seed after thee. Me and Thou; thee Abraham, and thy Natural Household and Family here, between Me and You, and thy Seed after thee; that Seed, which shall be called in Isaac, thy Spiritual Household and Seed.*

Seed. And what was the *Covenant*, or Sign of the *Covenant*, which *They* (and not the *Seed*) were to keep then? What? No other *Covenant* or Sign, than that of Circumcision? *This is my Covenant, which you shall keep; Every Man-Child among you (not among the Seed, but among You) shall be Circumcized; and you shall Circumcize the Flesh of your Fore-skin: [You still, not the Seed.]* And what was Circumcision for? It was for a Sign and Token of the *Covenant*; and to *Whom* it was to be so, is clearly implied in the *Limitation*: It shall be a Token, a Sign of the *Covenant between Me and You*. Not Me and You, and thy Seed after thee. It shall be a Sign and Token of the *Covenant*, in the Dispensation of it, which *now is* between Me and You; not in the Dispensation of it, which shall be between Me and thy Seed: It shall be a Token of my *Covenant*, as it is between Me and You; thee *Abraham*, and thy Natural Household and Family: But not as it is to be transacted between Me, and thy Spiritual Seed.

If you say, (for I will say for you all I can imagine possible to be said, with any Colour) "That the Sense should rather be this; *This is my Covenant, which you shall keep*: That is, which *Thou Abraham,*

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*“ham, and thy Seed after thee, in their
 “Generations, shall keep: And this
 “shall be a Sign and Token between Me
 “and You; that is, between Me and Thee,
 “and Thy Seed after Thee, in their Gene-
 “rations.”]* If you say, This is the Sense
 of the Text, I must be plain to tell you,
 It cannot be so; and that because he doth
 so plainly distinguish in It, between You and
 the Seed: *This is the Covenant, which you
 shall keep between Me and You, and thy Seed
 after thee.* So that You, which is so plain-
 ly Contradistinguished and opposed to the
 Seed, cannot possibly be understood to com-
 prehend It. And it is also considerable, that
 he saith, *This is my Covenant, which you shall
 keep between Me and You, and thy Seed; not
 Between Me and Thee, and thy Seed:* And
 yet it doth refer to Verse the 9th. where
 it is said, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, Thou
 and thy Seed.* But here, You is put instead
 of Thou, to signifie that Thou in the 9th.
 Verse, must be understood of Abraham not
 Personally only, but Collectively; Abraham
 standing there for Himself, and his Natu-
 ral Family: Thou, and thy Seed, is Abra-
 ham and Christ; Both in the Mystery.

This last Consideration minds me of the
 Third Particular to be demonstrated; which
 is, That *Another Sign besides that of Cir-
 cumcision,*

circumcision, is clearly intimated in the Text we discourse on, as a thing that should be afterwards. And this is manifest; for whereas he had said, That the Seed, as well as Abraham, (and under Abraham I have proved the Natural Off-spring and Family of Abraham comprehended,) was to keep the Covenant in the Sign, or to keep the Sign of the Covenant, in the 9th. Verse; and he instituted Circumcision, but to be a Sign between Him and Abraham, and Abraham's Natural Off-spring and Family; and to be kept but by Them, and not by the Spiritual Seed: [This is the Sign of the Covenant, which you (not which Thou and thy Seed) shall keep; and it shall be a Token of my Covenant, [as] between Me and You; not [as] between Me and Thee, and thy Seed after thee.] What remaineth, I say, seeing the Seed is equally obliged as well as Abraham, to keep the Covenant in some Sign, as was proved before; and that it was not to keep it in the Sign of Circumcision, as is evident Now; what remaineth, but that there is some other Sign, in which It was to keep it, that should be a Token of the Covenant in that Administration of it, which should be afterward between God and the Seed; as Circumcision was of the same Covenant, but in the Dispensation

penfation and Tranfaction of it, then, between *God* and *Abraham's* Person, and Natural Houſhold? Circumciſion was the Token of the Covenant, as adminiſtred between *God* and *Abraham*; and Baptiſm the Token of the ſame Covenant, as adminiſtred between *God* and the *Seed*: If *Abraham* was Circumcized, *Chriſt* was Baptized.

Upon the whole; Let us now review the *Text*, and ſee it in the entire Senſe: And thus I *Paraphraſe* it. I will Eſtabliſh my Covenant between *Me* and *Thee*, and thy *Seed* after thee, in their Generations, for an Everlaſting Covenant, &c. And therefore *Thou*, Thou and thy *Seed* after thee, in their Generations, ſhall keep the *Sign* of my Covenant: And *This* is the *Sign* of my Covenant, [That my Covenant, which is between *Me*, on the *One Part*, and *YOU*, thou *Abraham*, and thy Natural Family and Houſhold, on the *Other Part*; and thy *Seed* after thee, on the *Third Part*.] I ſay, *This* is the *Sign* that *YOU*, for your part, ſhall keep as a *Sign* of this Covenant, which is between *Me* and *YOU*, and thy *Seed* after thee; *Every Man-Child among You ſhall be Circumcized*; and *You ſhall Circumcize the Fleſh of Your Fore-skin*. And this *Circumciſion* ſhall be a *Special* and *Particular* Sign

Sign and Token of the Covenant; as it is between *Me* and *YOU*; between *Me* and *Thee*, *Abraham*, and thy Natural Household. But as for the *Seed*, no mention of
 1 *It*, when he saith, *This shall be a Sign of the Covenant*, &c. which sufficiently implieth another Administration to be with *That* afterward.

And I pray you mark, that where he calleth Circumcision the *Covenant*, Verſ. 10.
 1 he saith, *You shall keep it between Me and You, and thy Seed*; because the *Covenant* (of which Circumcision was a *Sign*) was a
 1 *Covenant* between *God*, and the *Seed* too, as well as between *God* and *Abraham*, and his Natural Family. But when he saith expressly, It shall be a Sign and Token, then
 1 he restrains it; *It shall be a Sign of the Covenant between Me and You*: Implying, that though the *Covenant* be also with the *Seed*, and Circumcision was a *Sign* of that *Covenant*; yet it was specially and particularly a *Sign* of it, as transacted between *God* and *Abraham's* Natural Person and Family; and so a special and particular *Sign* of that *Oeconomy* in the Natural Household. *It shall be a Sign between Me and You*; [and not between *Me* and *You*, and thy
 1 *Seed*.] And so much for the First Objection.

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What you *next* offer in Objection to my Argument, is ; “ That it follows not, that
 “ because the Substance of the Covenant on
 “ God’s Part, is Immutably and *Unchange-*
 “ *ably the same*, (that) therefore the Du-
 “ ty and Incumbence is also *so* on ours :
 “ For seeing God hath Absolute Sovereign-
 “ ty in and over all his Creatures, and
 “ hath unlimited and boundless Right, as
 “ to command, so to suspend and alter the
 “ Instances and Duties of their Obedience,
 “ both as and when he pleases ; that may
 “ be the *Duty* of his People at one time,
 [You should have added, to make it per-
 tinent ; *By vertue of the same Covenant and*
Edict, and in the same Respect,] “ which
 “ is not so at another. This you *Confirm* ;
 “ because else, you see not how it should
 “ come to pass, that for at least two thou-
 “ sand Years before the Time of *Abra-*
 “ *ham*, no such Duty or Incumbence did
 “ lie on the Patriarchs ; particularly, not
 “ on *Adam*, on *Abel*, on *Enoch*, on *Noah*,
 “ or on the other *Antediluvian Fathers* ; of
 “ whom we do not read, that any of them
 “ were *Signed*, or that they were obliged
 “ to any Sign ; though you say, It cannot
 “ be denied, that they *were in the Covenant*
 “ of *Grace*, and saved by *It* as much as *A-*
 “ *bramah* himself, or any of His. So that
 “ here

“ here is an *Objection*, and an *Enforcement*,
 “ and *Confirmation* of that *Objection*.

As to the *Objection*, (*viz.*) *That it will not follow, (that) because the Substance of the Covenant, on God's Part, is immutably and everlastingly the same; therefore the Duty and Incumbence on ours, is also such:* I answer. It will follow *well enough*, if the Duty and Incumbence on our Part, be founded on the *Substance* of the Covenant, which is on *God's (Part,)* as the Duty and Incumbence in dispute between us is: It being, *I will Establish my Covenant between Me and Thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations, for an Everlasting Covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy Seed after thee; &c. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations.* For though Almighty God be absolute Sovereign over all our Persons; and also over all his own Transactions and Methods, so as he may make at one time to be our Duty, that which he doth not another; and may transact and deal in way of Covenant with some, when yet he hath not pleas'd to do so with others: Yet if at any time, or with any Persons, he pleases to transact in way of Covenant, and to confirm that Transaction by his Word and Oath,

Oath, the two immutable things in which it is impossible that he should Lye, and also to bottom the Duty and Incumbence to which he doth oblige by vertue of that *Covenant*, on *that* which is unchangably and immutably confirmed in *it* ; We can no more, without a Blasphemous Imputation to him of Inconstancy and Weakness, introduce him making an Alteration in the *Duty*, than in the *Promise* it self, seeing the *Obligation* to the Duty, is a necessary result and emanation of the Reason of it, and consequently, is *uncapable* of being changed without a change of the Covenant, the unchangable Promise of God to *Abraham*, and to his Seed, is the *Foundation* of the Duty lying on *Abraham* and on his Seed ; and the same Covenant as the same, must alwayes have the same effects, and make the same Duties.

Ay ? but then how came it to pass that *Adam*, *Abel*, *Enoch*, and others the most Antient Fathers, who were under the Covenant of Grace as well as *Abraham* and his descendants, God being a God to them as well as to him, did not keep the Covenant in the sign thereof, if the Duty to keep the Covenant in the sign thereof be Everlastingly the same, and of an unchangable nature ? This is your Confirmation.

But to manifest the Invalidity of all is said by way of Confirmation, I need but to demonstrate, *First*; That though all the Fathers were saved on the account of Jesus Christ, and by vertue of the Eternal Compact and Agreement between God and him, he being the Everlasting Father; yet (contrary to what you do suppose) it did not please God, at least not in the Account of the Scripture, to Transact with all, or any of them, in way of Covenant for Grace, Eternal Life and Salvation, before he did so with Abraham. *Secondly*, That if he had been pleased to transact, with all or any of them in way of Covenant for those ends; yet that Transaction could not be the Covenant of Abraham; and therefore seeing the believing Gentiles do not claim the Inheritance, Eternal Life and Salvation from by and under Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, or any other Covenanted Person or Persons before Abraham (if there were any such) but only from, by, and under Abraham, nor by vertue of any other Covenant whatever, made with all or any of them, but only by vertue of Abrahams; It is certain that the Termes, which it pleased God to go upon with them in any transaction he had with them (be they what they will) are, in account of Scripture, as Little to us, as those he

went

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went upon with Abraham are much. And Thirdly, That the Obligation to keep the Covenant, Gen. 17. in the sign thereof, though it were not, and indeed could not be observed by all or any of the Antients before Abraham, yet notwithstanding, that it is in a Scriptural sence, and consequently, properly enough, called a Duty and Obligation of immutable and unchangable nature, and Everlastingly the same.

The first Proposition, (viz.) That though all that ever were saved, were saved by virtue of the Atonement and Propitiation made by the blessed Jesus, He being in the efficacy and virtue of his Merits and Passion, the Lamb slain even from the Foundation of the World; yet, that, at least in the Account of Holy Scripture, it did not please God to transact with all, or any of the antient, either the Antediluvian or Postdiluvian Fathers, in way of Covenant for Grace, Eternal Life and Salvation before Abraham, is a manifest Verity. For though all the Fathers that were saved, were so by some degree and kind of faith; and were so by Jesus Christ, and through the Eternal Covenant (as Divines call it) of Redemption between God and him; and though they all did worship and honour God in way of Sacrifices, in all which the Blessed Jesus, the

true Lamb of God, was figured and represented ; and *though* Jesus Christ himself saith, before *Abraham* was, I am, yet, *that* it pleased God to transact with *all*, or any, or either of them, before *Abraham* in way of Covenant or Promise for Eternal Life, and Salvation, or, *that* Jesus Christ was Preached to them, or otherwise exhibited then in Types and Figures, (which we are not told they understood.) is *no where* said or recorded, or so much as hinted in the *whole Scripture*. Our Saviour saith indeed, that *Abraham* did see his day, but he saith not, nor do the Scriptures say that *Adam*, *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, &c. saw it. What might be Preached by the *Spirit*, further then the *Scriptures* tell us, and then the Holy Ghost is pleased in *them* to Reveal to us, is no proper subject for our now Inquiry ; We are now to mind but what is Preached by the Scriptures, and Recorded in them ; Remembring, that the very *silence* of the Scriptures is Mystical, as is evident in the case of *Melchizedeck*, who though (whatever Learned *Cunams* thought) he were a Man, and consequently was not, really, *without* Father, without Mother, without Genealogy, without beginning of *dayes* or end of Life ; yet for great ends, (*he*) is taken and expressly said to be *so* ;
and

and that, because nothing, in the Least, is written and recorded in the Holy Scriptures touching him, as to these particulars. And shew me any Scripture that but hints a *Covenant* made with *Adam*, *Abel*, *Enoch*, with all, or any of the Antient Fathers before *Abraham*, or Promise made to them, or any of them, of Grace, Eternal Life and Salvation, wherein Almighty God did pass *his word* to be a God to them, or either of them, and their, or either of their Seed after them. I do not doubt but God was a God to them all, as I doubt not that *Melchisedeck* had a Father, Mother, Genealogy, beginning of dayes, and end of Life, but as the Holy Scriptures do nowhere mention any of *these* in Relation to *Melchisedeck*, so they nowhere intimate that God before *Abraham*, was a God to any of the *Antient Fathers*, in a way of *Covenant* or promise for Grace, Eternal Life or Salvation, and therefore, the least that can be said, if we should be prevailed to acknowledge any such transaction, must be (seeing the Scripture is so deeply silent in it) that as there is a *mystery* in the silence of the Scripture touching *Melchisedeck*, so there is a *Mystery* in the silence of it touching any such *Covenant* or Promise (if any such were) to the *Fathers*; and that as *Mel-*
H 3
chisedeck,

chisedeck, to be a *figure* of the Eternal Priest, must be brought in in Scripture as a man dropt out of the Clouds, without any mention of Father, Mother, &c. So likewise, to the end that *Abraham* might be according to the Scriptures, what in the Divine Council he was appointed and set up to be, namely, the *Father* of all the faithful, or express Believers in Christ, there must be no record in the Sacred Scriptures of any Promise of Christ before, as made to any other; or of any Explicit belief and Faith in him before. for had there been either, how could *Abraham* possibly be understood, in the account of the Scriptures, to have been the Father, and so the first of all the faithful, of all Believers in Christ? He only is first before whom no other is. Christ (I deny not) *may* have been Preached *before Abraham*, and also promised by the Spirit, but he is not *Revealed in the Scriptures* so to have been either Preached, or Promised: The Scripture is entirely silent as to any such Transaction; If any such Covenant or Promise were of Christ before, certainly in the account of Scripture it is as none, and so must be looked on of us as none; not the least *impression* or footstep of any such concern *appearing*. I acknowledge the old Fathers

to be said to have had faith in God, but they are not said to have had any in Christ, and these Faiths are so distinguished, that they may be Actually divided; you believe in God, says Christ, believe also in me; The Old Fathers did believe in God, they believed both that God was, and that he was a Rewarder, but Abraham did not only believe (as they did) in God, but he also believed in Christ. If you ask me, but is not God ~~was~~ a Rewarder in and through Christ, and not otherwise? I answer yes, and yet it is possible, they might believe in God, and not believe in Christ; They might believe God to be a Rewarder (as some Heathen do,) though they did not know him, and therefore could not believe him to be so but in Christ: That God is, and is a Rewarder, are Points of *Natural Religion*; But that Christ is, and God a Rewarder in Him, are Points of *Revelation*.

I acknowledge that what you say is commonly taken for granted, (viz.) "*That the Promise of Christ the Seed of the Woman, was made to Adam;*" And so much is true, that Jesus Christ is introduced by the Psalmist, as speaking of himself, and saying, that in the Volume of the Book, or (as some do render it) in the Head of the book

it is written of *him*, and so (though happily the Psalmist may have *Aspect* upon something else) I grant it *is*, Gen. 3. 15. for when it is there said, that *the Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpents head, &c.* It must be understood of Christ, at least in the Mystery, thus it is written of him, but that Christ was promised to *Adam*, is not written; For what is written in the Volume, or in the head of the Book concerning Christ, is not written there, as spoken by way of *Promise* to *Adam*, but by way of *denunciation* to the Serpent, and is part of the *Sentence* pronounced on him; which if indeed it were *within the hearing* of *Adam*, yet the Scripture doth not say it was *so*; So little doth the Scripture concern *Adam* in that Transaction, how great concern soever, in reality, he was to have in it. So the Text, Gen. 3. 14, 15. *And the Lord God said to the Serpent, &c.* What he sayes to *Adam* is verse 17. 18, 19. and of a very different nature. A declaration, I acknowledge, there is of Christ, from the beginning; but in the Record of the Scripture, that declaration is not noted as a transaction between God and *Adam*, by way of Covenant or Promise; All *is said* concerning it, is in what did pass *between God and the Serpent*, and some

ad loc. chuse to call it a *Prophecy*, not a *Promise* of Christ.

And it adds no little *confirmation* to the truth of what I have now discoursed, *that* after the Revelation of Jesus Christ in what passed between God and the Serpent; we have not for the long space of above Two Thousand Years the least Intimation in all the Scriptures, that any of the Fathers of that time had heard of that Revelation; (I do not say they had not heard, but I say the Scriptures do not so much as hint they had;) and though the Scriptures tell us, that in that time *Righteousness* was preached by the *Spirit*, yet they do not in the least tell us, that *Christ* was preached by it. And surely, had the declaration made concerning Christ in the Third ~~of~~ *Genesis* been, in the Account of the Scriptures, a Covenant or Promise of him to *Adam*, &c. I should much admire that the Apostle would insist so highly (as he doth) on the being of the Promise of Salvation by Christ for but some *hundreds* of years before the Law, when had this been so, he might have insisted on *thousands*; and the Apostle *Peter* dates the Covenant of Grace from *Abraham*, Act. 2: 25, 26. and before him, the Psalmist, Psal. 105. 8, 9, 42.

But secondly, on *supposal* that it had pleased God to transact with Adam, or any of the old Fathers before Abraham, in way of Covenant and Promise for grace, Eternal Life and Salvation; yet that Covenant and Promise could not be the Covenant of Abraham, in which it pleased God to Promise to be a God to him particularly, and to his Seed after him; For the Covenant of Abraham could not be before Abraham himself existed: And therefore, seeing the believing Gentiles do not claim Eternal Life and Salvation from, by, and under Adam, or any other of the Antient Fathers before Abraham; nor by vertue of any Covenant Transaction that hath passed between God and them, or any of them, but only from, by, and under Abraham, by vertue of the Covenant of Promise made with him; It is as clear that the *Termes*, Conditions and Methods on and in which it pleased God to transact with all, or any of those old Fathers, (be those termes and methods any whatever) (*they*) are nothing to us, as that the *Termes*, Conditions and Methods he is pleased to transact upon with Abraham in the Covenant of Promise, are all in all to us. That is, in plain English, That it is *nothing* in the least to us believing Gentiles, *whether* the Fathers before the Flood, or
after

after the Flood before *Abraham*, were in Covenant or not in Covenant, were signed or not signed, seeing we claim not *from*, by, and under *them*, as Heirs to them, but it is *much* to us, on what *Termes* it pleased God to transact and deal with *Abraham*, and under what *Conditions*, and with what duties *Abraham* did receive the Covenant and Promise, whether himself and his must be signed or not signed; seeing it is *from*, by, and under *him*, and by vertue of the Covenant of Promise made with *him*, that *we* do claim, and hold. And surely, if *we* do claim and hold in, by and under *Abraham*, by the Deed and Charter made to him, we must also claim and hold as he did, under the Duties and Conditions in that Deed and Charter, and now, is it not to deny the Conclusion after Concession of the Premises, for you to deny Believers and their Children must be signed, when yet you do acknowledge they are under *Abrahams* Covenant, which (as I have proved) requires such signing.

Ay! but you will say, "the *Patriarchs* were in the Covenant of Grace before *Abraham*, all as much as we, and yet signing had no use among *them*; and therefore the Incumbence and Obligation to sign and to be signed by vertue of the Covenant, be-
ing

ing founded not on the substance of it, but on the Administration, cannot be *Immutably* and everlastingly the same.] And, indeed, it must be acknowledged (that) signing was not in use among the Fathers before *Abraham*, at least not in the Account of the Scriptures, the Scriptures being deeply silent touching any such thing; but then the Scripture is as silent touching any Covenant transaction made with those Fathers, as it is touching signing by virtue of such a Covenant; So that, you are too positive Sir, and without Book, to affirm *them* as much in Covenant as we, and their *Children* as Holy by virtue of a Covenant transaction as ours. But supposing though not granting a *Covenant* transaction to have passed between God and the Fathers before *Abraham*, for Grace, Eternal Life and Salvation through the *Messiah*, and supposing also, *no* signing by virtue of *that* Covenant, for all that space of time, (which however, on supposal there was such a Covenant is a hardness to think;) yet, (in regard that Covenant could not be the Covenant of *Abraham*) though there was no signing *then*, the *Obligation* to sign and to be signed by virtue of the Covenant of *Abraham*, (which as I have shewed doth *indispensibly* and necessarily require it,) is

as

as Immutably and *Everlastingly* the same, and in the same Scriptural Sence, as the very *Covenant* it self is so ; It is for *Everlasting*, though not *from Everlasting*, it is *Everlasting a Parte Post*, though not *a Parte ante* ; *I will Establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations for an Everlasting Covenant, &c.* *Everlasting*, not *a parte ante*, as *from Everlasting*, for before *Abraham* was, this *Covenant* could not be between God and *Abraham*, to be a God to him, and to his Seed after him, and therefore it must be understood *a parte post*, as a *Covenant to Everlasting* ; And in *this sence*, the *Obligation* and *Duty* of the *Covenant* is as capable of being *Everlasting* as the *Covenant* it self ; which was the *third particular* to be demonstrated.

What I have discoursed already, might justly supersede any further answer to what you offer in the following Paragraph, about the Church Membership of Infants, on occasion of my saying [that the Church is one, though the Testaments be not, and that Children were Members not only of the Legal, but of the Gospel Church, and that, for above Four Hundred Years before the Law ; It being Gospel that was Preached to *Abraham* :] for “ you say on that occasion, that

“ that the Gospel was Preached too to *Adam*, at the time that he was told that the “ Seed of the woman should break the head of the Serpent. But I have proved that it was not *told* (as you express it) to *Adam*, but to the *Serpent*, as being spoken not by way of Promise to the one, but of denunciation of a Sentence on the other ; nor, in the Account of the Scriptures, was the Gospel Preached to *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, &c. nor were ~~they~~, in the Account of the Scriptures, in and under any Covenant of Grace for Eternal Life and Salvation, much less in and under the same Covenant, with believing *Abraham*, and his true Seed ; The Covenant of *Grace*, in the Promise of the Messiah for Salvation and Eternal Life, being in the Account of the Scriptures, *first transacted* with believing *Abraham*, and no otherwise.

And here, by the way, observe as a matter of no small moment, that Almighty God did *no sooner*, in the Account of the Scriptures, transact with man in way of Covenant for Eternal Life and Salvation, through the Messiah, but he obliged those in that Covenant, to *keep it* in the sign, and that from the beginning, *as soon* as he did *institute any sign* of the Covenant of Grace *for Parents* (which, in the Account of the
 Scip-

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Scriptures, was as soon as he *Established* the Covenant,) he did ordain *it* should be put on the *Children* also, and as much commanded the wearing of *it* by Infants, as by the Adult. So that from the *very beginning* of a Covenant transaction for Eternal Life and Salvation, or in the first making of the Covenant of Grace according to the Scriptures, (and we are to begin our accounts where they do,) the Obligation to keep the sign of the Covenant, or to keep the Covenant in the sign of it, was laid on *Abraham* for Children and Infants, as well as for himself and others in Age; and that, by special direction. And now, consider once again if there be no *connexion* between the substance of the Covenant and the Obligation (*viz.* to be signed;) Is not the substance of the Covenant on Gods part, the Promise to *Abraham* to be a God to him, and to his Seed after him in their Generations? And hath not God said, [*because*] *I will be a God to thee and to thy Seed*, therefore *thou shalt keep my Covenant, thou and thy Seed*? So plainly God hath put together the *Promise*, which is on his part, and the *Duty* and Obligation that lyes on ours: and when God hath *joynd* them, and put them together, what man, or men shall dare to *separate*, and put them asunder?

Again,

Again, whereas you say, "it is one
 "and the same Church for substance, that
 the Old Patriarchs before *Abraham*, and
 that we the Believing *Gentiles* as well as be-
 lieving *Abraham* himself, did and do belong
 unto.] I answer, it is one and the same *In-*
visible Church ; But if we take a Church *vi-*
sibly and *Formally*, (as now we are to take
 it, when we do speak of *Church-Member-*
ship :) Namely, for a Corporation or visi-
 ble Society of Holy Men, framed, and
 formed under certain special, external and
 distinguishing Laws and Institutions, for
 Spiritual ends ; Then I say, so taking it,
 we do not read in Holy Scriptures of any
 Church, any formal Church, any more than
 of a formal Covenant before *Abraham* ; It
 being in *his* Family that it pleased God to
 lay the first Foundation of the Common-
 wealth and Polity of *Israel*, and to form
 to himself a special Corporation and Soci-
 ety of Men, under visible and distinguish-
 ing Tokens, and this is properly called a
Church. For indeed a Church is nothing
 but a Company of called ones, visibly Af-
 sociated ; ἐκκλησία is ἀπὸ ἐκκαλεῖν ; A Church
 is termed so from calling ; Now as in the
 Account of Holy Scripture, *Abraham* and
his Family were the *First* that God trans-
 acted with in way of Covenant, for Grace
 and

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and Salvation through the Messiah ; So in the same account of Holy Scriptures, the first visible gathered Church, was in *Abrahams* Family, *Abraham* being the first that God in the Holy Scriptures is affirmed to have called out from his own Kindred, and his own Countrey to another that he knew not, which calling of him from his own Countrey to another that he knew not, was a figure (and by our Apostle is interpreted to be so *Heb. 11.*) of the true Spiritual calling of a Christian, which is a calling out of, and from the present evil World unto the Heavenly Country, the New *Jerusalem* that is above. Not but that before *Abraham* there were Righteous and good men, who in their Lives and Conversations, divided from the Communion of the World ; Men that lived justly and Righteously, and so were truly called out of the World, but yet they did not (at least the Scripture doth not intimate they did) actually divide and separate from others into distinct Societies, under any external and distinguishing Rites before *Abraham* ; yes there were Righteous and good men before *Abraham*, divided from the Common in the Piety, Sobriety, and Justice of their lives, there were Sons of God, distinguished by their Piety and Righteousness from

from the Sons of men before ; *The Sons of God took unto them the Daughters of Men* ; The Sons of good Men Married the Daughters of bad : But they were not Actually divided into distinct Societies and Corporations, under distinguishing Rites and Ceremonies before, and therefore there was not a visible Organical Church before.

And if what I now assert be true (as true it is, for the Holy Scripture no where intimates not in the least any such Formalization, Incorporation, or Distinguishing Association of Righteous good men for Spiritual and Holy ends before *Abraham* ;) then certainly no reasonable man hath any cause to admire that before *Abraham* there should be no *signing* ; I mean, no use of any *Initiating Rite*, any Rite of Matriculation, or of entring into the Spiritual Corporation and Society of the Church ; for no *Matriculation*, no Initiation into any Corporation or Society is to be conceived before the Corporation and Society it self be Constituted and Formed ; Nor can any *Rite* and Ceremony of Matriculation or Initiation be conceived extant before Matriculation and Initiation it self be so. No wonder then if no signing before *Abraham*, seeing no *Formal Church* before *Abraham* ; But yet as soon as it pleased God in Infinite Wisdom

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Wisdom to ordain the Incorporating of Holy Men into a visible Society for Holy and Spiritual ends, by making a *Formal Covenant* with them, and so distinguishing and dividing of them from others, he was then pleased to assume into that Society, as members of it, *Children* as well as *Parents*, *Infants* as well as *Adult* ones ; And to ordain, that the *Sign* of the Covenant, as the Rite and Ceremony of their Initiation and Admission (visibly and externally) into the Society of the Righteous, or into the Church, should be *put* upon *them* ; and *this* in deep Council, the better to *perpetuate* his Church ; So that from the beginning of the constitution of a Church, *Infants* were admitted unto Membership in it ; and this is the *Nursery* of the Church.

What you next tell me, (*viz.*) “ that there are other signes of the Covenant besides Baptism ; for instance, as Circumcision of old (I believe you meant the Passover of old ;) so the Lords Supper now, of which Infants are not by vertue of the Covenant, or any Administration of it, taken to be proper Subjects] This, after what is said already, is altogether impertinent ; for the *Sign* we dispute about, is that *Initiating Sign* only, which is the Rite of admitting persons into the visible Organiz^d.

Society of the faithful (a Society afterwards called the Common-wealth of *Israel*,) It being of *this* only that *Gen.* 17. 9, 10. (from which I argued) can be understood : and *this* Baptism is, as Circumcision was. Nor was the Passover ever *such a Sign*, nor is the Lords Supper *one* now.

“ Ay ! but if Infants are capable of be-
 “ ing Initiated into the Church of Christ by
 “ Baptism, then say you, they cannot just-
 “ ly be denied the Proper means of nou-
 “ rishment and growth by being admitted
 “ to the Supper also.] But this is a gross
non sequitur, For what can be more evi-
 dent than that the Subjects of the Ordina-
 nance of Baptism and of that of the Lords
 Supper are very different, as different as
 those of the Ordinance of Circumcision,
 and that of the Pascal Lamb (were;) For
 as the Institution of the Ordinance of Cir-
 cumcision was above 400 years before that
 of the Passover; so even Jesus Christ him-
 self; to intimate the same difference, did
 institute the Ordinance of Baptism (for his
 Disciples Baptized) long before his *Death*,
 whereas that of the Holy Supper (being
 but a Commemoration of it) was not in-
 stituted but just before his *Passion*.

And

And these considerations lead me to the *last thing* of any moment which you offer, a thing on which your whole Party do much insist, and is, "that as Infants are incapable of self Examination, of preparation for the Lords Supper, and of discerning of the Lords Body, which are *necessary requisites* to a due participation of that Holy Ordinance, and therefore are denied it; So they are equally *incapable* of Faith and of Repentance which are the *quisite conditions* of Admission to Baptism, and consequently, on equal reason are to be refused both the one, and the other,]

But here you should have proved *Faith* and *Repentance* necessary Conditions of all admission to Baptism, or Initiation into the Gospel Church; I grant *them* to be so to that of the *Adult Heathen*; and so *they* were before, in some degree, to those of *them* that would Associate with the Family of *Abraham*; And so *they* were to *Abraham* himself, for *Abraham* himself received the Sign of Circumcision, or Circumcision a sign of the Covenant between God and him, as a Seal and full Confirmation of that *Righteousness by Faith*, which he had while *Uncircumcised*; But then, as *Abraham* was admitted for his own Faith, but his

his Family in, by and under him, as Dedicated by Him ; So now the *Adult Heathen* if they be admitted, it must be in a way of Faith and Repentance for themselves ; but for their *Families* ; Those in them that are not yet Adult and come to Age, and in a Capacity of consenting or refusing for themselves ; They must be admitted as such were in *Abrahams* Family, viz. in, by and under their Parents and Heads, who Dedicate them.

But as to this so much is said by so many others, and so much is hinted also by my self in my Former Letter, that I do not think it worth the while to stay longer upon it ; Only I find in Mr. *Cradock* in his *Harmony of the Evangelists*, a Passage so full in this particular, and so convincing, that I should do you some wrong, and my discourse more, to omit it : First, *saith* he he gives them a Command and Commission to goe and Disciple all Nations, Baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, beginning at *Jerusalem*, [*Isa.* 2. 3. and 40. 9. *Psal.* 110. 2.] and declares that, he that believeth and is Baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. For whereas before he confined them to Preach only to *Israel*, now they must Preach to every
Crea-

Creature (namely, that is fit to be Preached to) that is, to all Nations. And such as were converted by their Ministry from Heathenism to Christianity, they were to Baptize. So that *this is not the first Institution* of Baptism, but an *inlarging* of their former Commission. *Neither* are these words any *Direction* as to that other matter of receiving or admitting Infants, or those that were not Infants. to Baptism : That, we may suppose was sufficiently notified to them before, both by the common *practise* of their Ancestors in the Jewish Religion, and by the *vulgar notion* of Baptism, whilst it was familiarly used among the Jews, both to their own and their *Proselyte Children*, and possibly by Christs special *direction* also, though not mentioned by any of the Evangelists, who set not down all the words of the *First Institution of Baptism*, which long preceded this time, as appears plainly from those words, *Joh. 4 1, 2.* When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and Baptized more Disciples than John, though Jesus himself Baptized not but his Disciples. Certainly, Christ Instituted Baptism, and gave his Apostles Commission before they took upon them to Baptize any, which we find they did in great Numbers ; yet the Gospel does not express

express the words of this First Institution, nor the certain time of it, in the course of Christs Ministry among them; but certainly it was sometime before that passage of story related in that forementioned place, *Joh. 4. &c.*]

To that assertion of mine, [*That the Churches of Christ universally have had a custom of Baptizing Infants, and for ought appears, perpetually;*] you tell me with a presumption too big for a greater *Antiquary*, (so much more easie it is to tell then to do,) “that you could *easily* give sufficient “*evidence* that the Churches of Christ *universally* have not had such a custom :] And I pray you, if it be so *easy*, oblige the World, and me particularly, by giving it; for still I think that in the time (at least) of *St. Austin*, the Custom was *Universal*, and that then, it was taken also, to have been perpetually *so* ; and this, by an Apostolical Tradition.

But that is more *Extravagant* which you add immediately after, and which may serve for a *Specimen* of your Ability to perform the boast you made before, “that we do “not find any footsteps of Infants Baptism “in the World till some Hundreds of years “*after Christ*, not till the conceit grew and “*took place* of giving Gods Grace by it
in

in *Cyprians* time.] But how learnedly and knowingly this is spoken may be seen in *Tertullian*, who if you know any thing in Antiquity, must be acknowledged to have been, in time before *Cyprian*, as being the most Antient of the Latine Fathers, and born in the year Two Hundred; and yet he in his Book *de Bapt.* c. 18. where for certain *Reasons* (but I pray you mark, the Novelty of the practise is not one of them,) he doth *Dehort* the Baptizing of Infants (as he did also *advise* the deferring of Baptism to the Adult, and in both was singular,) doth by that very *dehortation*, plainly intimate the common practise of it. *Itaq*, saith he, *pro cuiusq; persona conditione ac dispositione, etiam Aetate, Baptismi Cunctatio Utilior est: praesertim tamen circa Parvulos, quid enim necesse est, si non tam necesse, sponsores etiam periculo ingeri, &c.* So *Tertullian*; but again, what can you say to *Irenaeus* who was before *Tertullian*, and near the times of the Apostles, when he tells us *adversus haeres.* l. 2. 39. *Christus venit omnes per seipsum salvare, omnes Inquam, qui per seipsum Renascuntur in Deum; Infantes & parvulos & pueros;* and by *Renascencia* is understood Baptism, as is universally agreed by all learned in the Fathers.

And

And whereas I affirmed [*Antipedobaptisme* to make the Church of Christ a Church *in his ætatis* ;] you mistook my meaning when you took it to have been “ that your
 “ Opinion was but a *Novelty*, (though that
 “ be true too ;) and that seeing the Church
 “ of Christ cannot be without a true Bap-
 “ tism, and true Baptism, in your sense of
 “ Anabaptism, hath been not much above
 “ an Age or Century, particularly since
 “ the time of *Munger* (whom *Munster*
 “ calls *Monetarius* , least he should be
 “ thought of Kin to him ;) and since *John*
 “ of *Leyden* and *Knipperdolling* ; That
 “ therefore before the arising of these *new*
 “ *lights*, the true Church for many hundred
 “ years, had no existence and being.] For
 “ to do my self right, and you no wrong, I
 “ meant it not in using that expression ; I al-
 “ luded in it to *L. Flavius*, who speaking of
 “ the *Romans* in their Civil Original under *Ro-*
 “ *mulus*, while yet they had no Women, and
 “ so no hope of Posterity ; says, *Res erat*
 “ *Unius Ætatis, populus virorum* : and I inti-
 “ mated by it, that *Antipedobaptisme* by grub-
 “ bing up of Infants, and throwing them out
 “ of the Church, doth indeed destroy the
 “ *Nursery* of the Church, and so, in one Age,
 “ after the Extinction of the old stocks, doth
 “ put it in no small hazard of being utterly ex-
 “ tirped ;

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tiſped ; And now having this occaſion, I dare, in demonſtration of the Juſtice of the hint, almoſt appeal unto your own Experience, if of the Children of Perſons of your perſwaſion, within the compaſs of your own knowledge, that are Adult, and come to years of Diſcretion, and were not Baptized in their Infancy by ſome Relation or Friend, *one* almoſt in *ten* is any wiſe Baptized, and ſo entred into any Church (either yours or ours ;) for growing up, *diſlike* of your Opinion for the moſt part doth keep them from you ; And *Shame* of being Baptized in Age, (a thing diſuſed, and as things of that nature commonly are, a thing that makes talk and gazing,) keeps them from us ; And thus being in no Church, are viſibly in the ſtate of Heathens.

In your next remark, [when I make the denial of Infants Baptiſm a robbing Parents of a ſenſible ground of hope for their Children in caſe of the deceaſe of any of them in Infancy,] you do me manifeſt *Injuſtice* to Inſinuate a meaning of *Opus operatum*, a thing as far from my intentions as words. But I have ſufficiently expreſſed my Sentiments in that particular in the Paragraph reflected on, to thoſe that are conſiderate and candid, and therefore, there remains *no more* to be ſaid of it now.

But

But as to *what* you offer in the last place, [concerning the Powerful Motive to dedicate himself to God, which, I said, *Antipedobaptisme* depriveth a Child of ;] namely, "that for your part, you are of opinion that nothing can be a greater *hinderance* to him than Baptism, since he is hereby induced to reckon himself already a good Christian, and in a state of Salvation; as having had the Sign of the Covenant already applyed to him in his Infant State, without looking after the new birth, and being acquainted with the Mystery of Spiritual Regeneration, &c.] I profess I was astonisht to read it, both for the *Scandal* and offence it cannot but administer to those of a contrary perswasion; as also for the *ill reflection* which, with too much Colour, it may be interpreted to imply upon the Wisdom and Counsel of God, who, both before the Law, and under the Law, was pleased to *Institute the Signing of Children* with the Sign of the Covenant; which doubtless, had it been an *impediment* and hinderance to their Regeneration, and to Salvation, much more if a most powerful one, he, in his infinite goodness and clemency, as well as wisdom and conduct, would never have done. And do you indeed think that the Circumcision of Child en, instead of

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of being a furtherance to the work of Regeneration in *them*, was truly a hinderance to it, and that that which God intended for a meanes of Conservation and Perpetuation of his Church, was really and in effect, a way to destroy it: Where was the *Wisdom* of Almighty God, if he knew not what means were proper towards the Salvation of his Creatures? And where his *Goodness*, if he ordained what he knew improper? It is certain, if Baptism by being put on Children in their Infancy, in token of their being given to *God in Covenant*, be in it self a hinderance to their Regeneration; Circumcision which was put on Children in Infancy, and in token of their being given to *God in Covenant*, could be no furtherance, and consequently was a means of all others most improper to continue the Church, and so, a means equally unworthy both of Divine Prudence and Wisdom, and of his Goodness and Mercy.

Thus I have finished my defence of the *Argument* for Infants Baptism from *Gen.* 17, and I think, have answered all is capable of being opposed against it, and yet seeing I know not but you may have more, I now offer, that if you have any thing else of any Moment to object either against the *Argument* it self, or against what is offered

NOW

now in the defence of it; If you propose it, so it be without unnecessary digressions into common places, and without popular trappings, and it be with the Candour and Sincerity, and with the modesty and temper that becomes a lover and seeker of Truth, I shall answer it chearfully, and therein give another Instance how much I am.

*Borden April 1st.
1682.*

Dear Sir,

Your True Friend

R. B.

The

The Third Letter.

Dear Sir,

YOUR Letter of the 29th. of *September* in Answer to that I sent you the 21st. of *April*, though put into so good and safe a hand, came not to mine before this 14th. of *October*, and then open. Happily it had occasion to call in our Friends; and many times, the farthest way about is nearest home.

However, though late come, I do assure you it is Welcome; for I learn by it that the Controversie long depending, and which I fear'd would be Eternal, is not likely to continue much longer. And that after all the Exclamations of Evident and most Evident, of Plain and most Plain, of Scriptural, of Solid, of Substantial and Cogent which you make on what *You* say; and of Chimera's, of Repugnant to Scripture, of doubtful Consequencies and ambiguous

guous Uncertainties, of violence to the Text, of Corruption of Scripture, and of Addition to it on what I prove. The whole *now* is to determine on two *Issues*, the one Relating to the Duty enjoyned *Gen. 17. 9.* the other to the Subject of that duty; [what is meant by the Seed, and what by keeping the Covenant :]

As to the *First Issue* which concerns the Subject of the Duty (for I will begin with *that*,) I have abundantly evinced in my last Letter (and yet you take no notice of it) that by Seed in the 9th. verse, must be understood the Spiritual, as well as the Carnal Seed, and that, because the same Seed is meant in the 9th. verse that is in the 7th. and 8th. verses, the same subject in the general obligation verse the 9th. in all respects, that is in the promise, verses 7th. and 8th. and the same subject in the temporal promise verse the 8th. that is in the Spiritual verse the 7th: and the subject in the 7th. (you grant) doth take in all the Seed; the Spiritual as well as the Carnal, and therefore, so it must be in the 8th. and the 9th. I and in the 10th. also.

Ay! but say you, the 8th. verse is to be understood only of the *Carnal Seed*, and why only (say I) unless the 7th. be also to be understood, of *that* only doth the Holy Ghost

Ghost distinguish ? or if he do not, how dare you ? the Subjects are the same in both ; The Connexion carries it for the same Subjects ; and in both the Verses there are the same words to express the subject, and why not then the same subjects meant by the same words ? Especially in regard the whole is but a continuation of one Speech of God to *Abraham* ; *I will Establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed,* verse the 7th. *And I will give to thee, and thy Seed,* verse the 8th.

It is true (as you suggest) in the Letter, *Canaan* is Promised too, and was Possessed by the Carnal Seed, but the Litteral is not the only sence, and therefore the Litteral are not the only subjects : The Mystical and Spiritual is the principal sence, and therefore the Mystical and Spiritual are the principal subjects : Thus Argueth the Apostle, *Seed* (saith he) not *Seeds* : *Seed*, and that *Seed* was *Isaac* in the Letter, for the promise even of *Canaan* (mark it) was not made to *Ishmael*, though he were *Abrahams* Seed too, and then alive, and with him, nor to the Seed of *Abraham* that should derive from him by *Ishmael*, but it was made to *Isaac* ; *in Isaac shall thy Seed be called* : and *Isaac* in the Letter, in the Mystery is Christ. He saith not *Seeds*
K (saith

7 (saith he) as comprehending *Ishmael* and
Isaac, but he saith *Seed*, as speaking but
 1 of one, of *Isaac* only, which *Isaac* in the
 Truth is Christ Mystical. Further, consi-
 der though *Canaan* only was promised in
 the Letter, verse the 8th, the World is
 intended in the Mystery, and therefore,
 though it be said in the Text, *The Land*
in which thou art a Stranger, even all the
Land of Canaan, yet the Apostle amplify-
 eth the expression, *Heb. 11. 13.* and saith,
They were Pilgrims and Strangers upon the
Earth, not in *Canaan* only, but in the
 Earth. And if in the Promise which is
 made of *Canaan* the World be intended,
 well may believing *Gentiles* be intended in
 the Seed to whom it is made: For how else
 as they are *Abraham's* Seed is all theirs; if
 all were not some where given to *Abraham*
 and to his Seed, and where is all given to
Abraham and to his Seed, and so to believ-
 ing *Gentiles*, but here? Read I pray advi-
 sedly, what our Apostle argues, *Gal. 3.*
 And in your next take also what I argued in
 my last, Paragraph by Paragraph, and so
 reply to it; Then happily you will see a
 consequence and Cogency that yet you do
 not, or that you dissemble if you do. Re-
 member also that when it is said in verse
 the 10th, *This is my Covenant which ye shall*
 keep

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p between me and ye, and thy Seed after
ye, there is no such Implication as you con-
ve there is in this expreffion [between
and thee and thy Seed] of the Subjects
the Duty [of keeping that Covenant,]
t of the Parties in the Covenant; which
I told you formerly) are three, and
ark it) God is one of them: Between
, namely, God on the one part, and ye,
ou Abraham and thy natural Family here
sent on the other part, and thy Seed,
ac in the Letter in whom the Seed was
led, and Christ (typified in Isaac, and in
the believing Gentiles, Children of the
omise) in the mystery on the third part.
s unadvised to infer that the Seed here
bliged to keep the Covenant of Circum-
on by virtue of that expreffion, the sub-
s that are bound to keep it are ye, ye
I keep this my Covenant, and the [Ye]
distinguished from the Seed, [between
and ye, and thy Seed:] you may as well
, all the parties are obliged to keep it,
God is one of them, as that, by force
that expreffion, any one is: those that
to keep it are represented under the
n [ye;] and they were to keep it be-
en God and themselves, and the Seed;
sign of the Tripartite,] Covenant be-
en them. And to be clear, I under-

stand the same Seed in the 7th. 8th. 9th. and 10th. verses ; *Isaac* in the Letter, Christ Mystical in the Spirit and Mystery. This for the first Issue.

As for the other which relates to the Duty, what can almost be plainer, than that by keeping of the Covenant in the 9th. verse, is meant keeping of it in the sign, or keeping the sign of the Covenant, for it is, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, therefore thou and thy Seed* in the 9th. verse, and then immediately is added in the 10th. in one continued Speech, *This is my Covenant which ye shall keep, &c.* So that the sense and meaning of the Phrase [of keeping the Covenant] in either verse, is clearly the meaning of it in both ; And therefore to keep the Covenant in the 9th. verse, is to keep the sign of the Covenant, seeing to keep the Covenant in the 10th. is to keep it so, [in the sign.]

That to keep the Covenant in the 10th. verse is to keep it in the sign is manifest, seeing their being Circumcised could not be a keeping of the Covenant (as it is plainly intimated in verse the 10th. to be, but so, (*viz.*) as it was the observation of the sign of the Covenant, and thus [in the sign] the Covenant of God was kept in Circumcision, as the Passover is said to be kept
when

when the Lamb was eaten in Memory of it ; So Scriptural a way of speaking this is. I say, as the Feast of the Paschal Lamb was not the Passover it self, but a sign only of the passing over, and yet the Passover is said to have been kept, when that Feast was kept (in sign of it,) as by comparing *Num.* 9. 2. &c. with *Exod.* 12. 3, 4, 12, 13. &c. manifestly appears. So likewise Circumcision, though it were not in it self the very Covenant of God, but only the sign of that Covenant ; [*Abraham received the sign of Circumcision, Rom. 4. and in Gen. 17. 10. It shall be a token of the Covenant between me and you.*] Yet the Covenant of God (according to the way of Scriptural Expression) might well be said to be kept, when Circumcision the sign of it, was observed. The Covenant in Scripture Language is said to be kept, when the sign of it is kept, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, is, thou shalt keep the sign of my Covenant. This is my Covenant which ye shall keep, is, this is the sign of my Covenant which ye shall keep.* And if keeping Circumcision then were keeping of the Covenant, because Circumcision was the then sign of it ; then keeping Baptism, now is keeping the Covenant, because Baptism is now the sign of it. To keep the Covenant here, is

as I have proved to keep the sign.

And now consider seriously, how plain and easie a sence this is I have of the word *I will Establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, between me and the Lord, and thee Abraham, and thy Seed Isaac in the Letter and Spirit, to be a God to thee Abraham, and to thy Seed after thee Isaac in the Letter and Spirit And I will give to thee Abraham, and to thy Seed Isaac in the Letter and Spirit, all the Land which thou art a Stranger. Even the Land of Canaan in the Letter to Isaac, in the Letter, and the World the whole World in the Spirit and Mysterys, to Isaac in the Mystery, and therefore thou Abraham and thy Seed [Isaac in the Letter and Spirit] shall keep [the sign of] my Covenant (But) this is [the sign of] my Covenant which ye which are now here, thou Abraham and Ishmael thy Son according to the Flesh, and the rest of thy Household here which stand for all the Seed according to the Flesh as follows This is [the sign of] my Covenant which ye for your part, shall keep [as a sign of the Covenant I have made between me and ye and thy Seed Isaac the Seed of the Promise and not of the Flesh] every Man-child among you [ye the Natural Family and Carnal Seed] shall be Circumcised. Amos*

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you, he doth not say among the Seed; The Seed is to keep the Covenant in a sign verse the 9th. but the Natural Family only are to keep it in *this* sign, in Circumcision; *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore* [in the sign of it] *thou and thy Seed*; (But) *this is my Covenant which ye shall keep, &c.* Every Man-child shall be Circumcised.

Ay, say you, but in the sign of it is your Addition only. Not so say I, it is but my Explication according to the Scripture, Ay, but when God did tell *Abraham, Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore thou and thy Seed*, had no more (say you) been added, *Abraham* could never have understood that God intended hereby, this Covenant was to be observed in any external sign; true, say I, had not God explained his meaning, *Abraham* might well have doubted of it; but why doubt you? Since more is added; and in what is added, God explains himself, and shews that, by keeping the Covenant, he meant keeping the sign of it: Ay, but a sign is a common separable accident to a Covenant (in general,) well, but it is not so to this (in special;) Other Covenants have been (you say) without a sign; but to be sure, in this a sign is made necessary; For to keep the Covenant is to keep the sign. Ay, say you, but let go this 7th.

of *Genesis* which is no more to purpose then the first, and then I will answer what else you have to say. Yes, very likely, as you have what is already said, and if I will throw away my weapons you will fight me. In fine, what (say you) so important an ordinance to depend on consequence from an Old Testament Text ! Yes (say I) and on the consequence of this Old Testament Text depends all the New Testament Doctrine of our Inheritance and Heirship ; See *Gal.* 3.

And now, Dear Sir, is there not a word, not a syllable (as you express it) in the 17th. of *Genesis*, that the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham* are to keep the Covenant in the sign of it ? Have not I proved the Seed here is *Isaac* in the Spirit Principally ? doth not God distinguish between ye and thy Seed ? is not Circumcision enjoyed only on the natural Carnal Family of *Abraham* in the term *ye* as it is distinguished from the Seed ? is not the same the subject in the Obligation in the 9th. verse, that is in the Promise Spiritual in the 7th. and temporal in the 8th. you cannot deny it, if you read the Text. If you design me any satisfaction, it must not be by blending and confounding things that differ, nor by common placing and keeping off in generals, but you must come up close

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close to the matter, and shew why the subject in the general Obligation verse the 9th. is, in all respects the same with that in the Promise, both the Temporal and the Spiritual, but the subjects of the Obligation to Circumcision in particular, which is in the 10th. is altered. It is not there thou and thy Seed as all along before, but [ye] and [ye] is in the Letter *Abraham*, and those then with him there : But *Isaac* was not there, he was the Promised Seed. Again, why doth God distinguish [ye] from the Seed ; *between me and ye, and thy Seed*. In fine, why all along in the both and 11th. verses, both in the imposition of Circumcision, and in the intimation of the end and use of it, the Holy Ghost doth use a restrictive term, and never mentions the Seed but *ye, ye shall keep &c.* and *it shall be a token between me and ye* ; He saith not thy Seed shall keep it &c. nor that it shall be a token to the Seed ; He saith thy Seed shall keep the Covenant in a sign, but doth not say that they shall keep the Covenant in this sign ; They must keep a sign but not this sign. Clear up these questions and you do something, and without it all is nothing.

Thus I have briefly stated the issues on which the thing in Controversie between us now depends, and I have answered your objections

jections, and am bold to say again that I have done it with the candour and fairness that becomes a seeker of truth. I mince not what you say ; I raise no dust to hide your strength, or blind the eyes of a Party. I do not frighten you with the threatnings on diminutions of Scripture ; as you do me with those on Additions ; such common placing here is out of place, and is fooling. I love not Tragical Declamations instead of Argumentation. Nor yet am I by noise and clamour and harangues of words which take with the people, but not with the wise, to be diverted from pursuing advantages. I know where I pinch you ; and yet I hate to cry *Villars* while the field is disputing. I am a lover of plainness ; as well as a seeker of all truth, and therefore use as little Artifice in arguing, as I do in Professing my self,

October 14. 1682.

Dear Sir

Your Real Friend

R. B.

The Fourth and Last Letter.

Dear Sir,

IN your former Letter of September the 29th. you told me, ~~that the words~~ "in the 17th. of Genesis [Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore thou and thy Seed, &c.] do neither express nor give any the least intimation of any sign at all that God intended should be Annexed unto the Covenant, &c. for there God commands Abraham to keep the Covenant in General Terms only, and doth not say thou shalt keep my Covenant in the sign of it, that being (say you) my Addition only, &c. But in this of December the 15th. which I Received the 20th. you tell me, that as far as you can discern, God speaks but of one sign in both verses, [viz. 9. 10] Now, how I pray you can he speak of one sign in both verses, if (as you copiously affirmed) he speaks

speaks nothing in the least of any sign at all in *one* of them? who is it now (to use your own Expressions) that is Dazled? that sees or saw one for two, and two for one? and yet, all you say is Demonstration, 'tis Solid, Scriptural, Substantial, and all I say is Chymera's, Contradictions, unproved Dictates, &c. Really Dear Sir, some grains of *Modesty* would do no hurt; *It* would at least serve to make your *Alterations* more excusable.

But the *former*, is not the only *Point* (though mind, it be one of the two Issues on which the whole between us must determine,) in which you are so *slippery*; you are as much *so* in another, and *that* the second Issue; for in your former Letters, all a long, you understand by the *Spiritual Seed* as I do, and as you ought, (*viz.*) Christ and Believing *Gentiles* (to whom happily, you add Believing *Jews*,) or Christ Mystical represented in *Isaac*, and indeed, without a softer place in ones head than I am willing to believe you have, it is impossible, seriously, to take it otherwise; for 'tis [*in Isaac thy Seed shall be called*;] not [*thy Seed shall be called Isaac*.] And yet, in your Letter *now* you take the *Spiritual Seed* for *Isaac's Person*; A fence of the *Spiritual Seed* against fence; For it is *Isaac*

in the Spirit only that is the Spiritual Seed, and *Isaac* in the Spirit, is Christ Mystical; For so the Apostle [*and to thy Seed which is Christ.*] It is true, *Isaac* was a Mystical Person as he was a Type and Figure; but if you mean but *that* by his being the Spiritual Seed, [that he was the Seed of *Abraham*, and was a Mystical Person,] then *Isaac* was no more the Spiritual Seed than *Ishmael*; *Ishmael* being as much the Seed of *Abraham*, and as much a Mystical and Typical person as *Isaac*; *Ishmael* a Type and Figure of the Legal Carnal Seed, as *Isaac* of the Believing Evangelical Seed; The former representing the *Jews*, the latter Christ and Believing *Gentiles*. Only, as *Ishmael* to be a Type and Figure of the Carnal Legal Seed, was to be born *after the Flesh*, according to the Rule and Law of Generation in Nature; So *Isaac* to be a Type and Figure of the Spiritual Evangelical Seed [who were to be *born not of bloods, nor of the will of the Flesh, nor of the will of Man, but of God*] was to be born *after the Spirit*, (*viz.*) by the power of God according to and in performance of his Promise (made) to *Abraham*. And to be born *after the Spirit*, with respect to *Isaac*, is not (as happily, you may conceive it) to be Regenerated and new born Spiritually; but

but to be born as to his natural Person not as *Ishmael* was, in the ordinary course of Nature by meer Carnal Coition ; but by *Promise*, in a supernatural way, above the Rules and Lawes and Powers of Nature, by Almighty Power Assisting ; even when it had ceased (as the Scripture tells us) to be with *Sarah* after the manner of Women, and when *Abraham* Himself also was old. See *Gal.* 4. 23, 29. what is to be by *Promise* in the one verse, is to be *born after the Spirit* in the other. To start then a fence of the Spiritual Seed which was not thought of before, and which were not to the Purpose if a good one, is *doubling* ; and a Hare is used to *double*, when near run down.

Had I been engaged in this controverſie with a man *unprejudiced*, and not with one who, in adherence to an opinion long ago Conceived and Riveted, is obliged to do all things to maintain it, with one ſuſceptible of Light, and not with one that *wriggles*, and winds, and turns, and all to avoid it ; with one that admits of plain ſence, and not with one that will not ſee, that *thrice one makes three* ; or, that a Covenant between *God* and *you*, and *thy Seed after thee*, is a Covenant between *three parties*. I ſay, had I had the happineſs of debating

bating and trying of it with a Person indifferent; and not the misfortune of being engaged with one so hugely prepossessed, and one not very consistent to Himself, or to his Principles, the business long ago had been ended; but who can draw the Picture of Proteus, or catch a Capering Will with the Wisp? [*Ignis fatuus*]

As to your groundless, severe, Provocative *Reflections* (the which you call *Reproofs* dress'd up (by all means!) in studied, clean, mild, decent, and Christian Language,) I say once for all, that it were easie for me, if I durst allow my self the liberty you take in that kind, and that it were not both undecent and unchristian to sharpen my Pen too: But I am resolv'd not to gratifie your *design* by any such intemperance. I can better bear then deserve your Reprehensions, and I have (I believe) too great *Advantage* in the *cause*, and in my Argument, to marr it by so *bad* Example. I alwayes thought it very improper in Debates and Controversies instead of Arguing, to be (as you Phrase it,) Cutting. He is rather a Butcher then a good Chyrurgion; that delights in cutting, and tearing, and flasing, when there is no need of it. Surely, softer words and harder Arguments would more become you.

But

But among all your Groundless Provocations, none is more absurd, nor more unhandsome then the *umcry*, the Tragical Outcry which you raise upon a *Mistake* of the Transcriber, and *that* too but in a word, but in a letter, and without marring the Sence; [*in Isaac shall the Seed be called*] viz. [the Seed] instead of [thy Seed] for so in truth, it was in the *Exemplar*, but likely, on a hasty cursory review of the *Transcript* not alter'd, because it stood with the sence. But though it were not in the First Exemplar [the Seed] but [thy Seed,] and [the] indeed were only a mistake of him that Copyed it; yet had you repeated the whole *Period* in which it was inserted, (but *that* must be *cleanly, meekly, decently*, Dissembled for the cause, and that you might have matter to work on;) it would appear that in that place, and in that manner in which the passage was brought in; [the] was not improper; no, no more improper then [thy.] For thus it stands in the Letter was sent — “The Promise even
 “of *Canaan* (mark it) was not made to
 “*Ishmael*, though he were *Abrahams* Seed
 “too, and then alive, and with him; nor
 “to the Seed of *Abraham* that should de-
 “rive from him by *Ishmael*, but it was made
 “to *Isaac*, for in *Isaac* shall the Seed be
 called,

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called, and *Isaac* in the Letter, in the Mystery is Christ.] And who but *Argue*, if even *He* with all his Hundred Eyes can spy a fault here? I, but if it cannot be spy'd, (happily) it may be felt, for (say you) *it is a Palpable abuse of Scripture in misfrendring it.*] And is it so? but what then, if both [the] and [thy] too had been omitted, and [His] put in? Sure the sence had still been good, and the Argument good still, and the Scripture not abused. For Allegation and Application of Scripture, even by Christ Himself, and by his Apostles, who I believè, would not abuse it by misfrendring, is not (as might be manifested in a hundred Instances) alwayes (as you would have it) to a syllable, and in termes; but to the sence, and present purpose: and sure I am, that the Seed [of *Abraham*] should be called in *Isaac*; is to my purpose, and is the sence of *Genesis* 21. 12. * as much as *Gal.* 4. 30. is to the sence of *Gen.* 21. 10. and to the Apostles Purpose. Thus over subtil you be; without Discretion, without Judgment, and without Candour, and this 'tis to be Learned in *Schoolmen*, and to have subtil *John Duns* (Scotus) for a Master. But to our business.

Whereas I had said I have abundantly evinced that by Seed in the 9th. verse, must be

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be understood the Spiritual as well as the Carnal Seed; you reply, that *that may be easily evinced which was never controverted:*] As if it had not been in the Controversie all along, and been the *main* of it, and acknowledged to be so in your former Letter [whether the Spiritual Seed were meant in the 7. 8. 9. and 10th. verses as well as the Carnal?] and is not *this* the first Issue, in which you have joyned? Well, but whatever it was before, my business *now*, as you assign it, is to prove (in your terms) that *Isaac* *quatenus* Spiritual Seed, or (which I think you mean, or mean nothing to purpose) that *Isaac* as he represented the Spiritual Seed or Christ Mystical, is meant in verse the 9th. And this I think I have sufficiently evinced already, and that (after your *Concession*) it needeth no more Eviction; It being indeed a *Figure* of speaking, called in *English* a *Bull*, to say the Spiritual Seed is meant as well as the Carnal (as you say, and say it was never controverted,) and yet, that the Spiritual Seed as Spiritual is not meant, for if the Spiritual Seed, be not meant as Spiritual, then the Carnal Seed *only*, and not the Spiritual as well as the Carnal is meant. This should suffice by way of Rejoynder; But, because (as you *affirm*) this is a Foundation Stone (such as it is)

is) in that structure I have raised, and you are so over confident (for nature will have its course,) that I cannot prove by Scripture, that the Spiritual Seed *as* Spiritual, is meant in the 9th. verse ; *besides*, what I have done already in my former Letters, which stands altogether on this foot, and which you have not in the least reply'd to ; and *besides*, that I cannot conceive if the Spiritual Seed be meant at all (as you grant it is) but that it must be meant *as* Spiritual (for it is *you* must tell me, *how* else, it can be meant;) I say, besides all this, you shall have a Text; a plain Text for it. But before I Cite the Text, I will assume as certain and agreed between us, to make it come home, what you have *asserted* very fully in a *former* Letter, and also I have proved; (*viz.*) that the *same* subject in all respects is meant in the 9th. verse, *that* is in the 8th. ; And taking this for granted, I affirm that the Apostle says all as much as you would have me to prove, when *Rom.* 4. 13, 16, 17. He argues in these terms, *For the Promise that he (viz. Abraham) should be the heir of the World, was not to Abraham, or to his Seed by the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith ; therefore it is of Faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the Promise might be sure to*

All the Seed ; *not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham*, [clearly implying, the Promise would not have been sure to *all* the Seed, if it had not been *so* to *both* Seeds.] *who is the Father of Us all.* But to apply the Text. Either the *Promise* made to *Isaac* (for in *Isaac* *Abrahams Seed* is called,) was made to him, and so the *Obligation* lay upon him *quatenus*, as he represented the Seed of the *Faith of Abraham* ; or it was made to him, and so the *Obligation* lay upon him *as* not representing *that* Seed : If you say the *Promise* was made to him, and so the *Obligation* lay upon him *quatenus*, as he represented the Seed of the Faith of *Abraham*, then it was made to him, and the *Obligation* lay upon him *quatenus*, as he represented the *Spiritual Seed* ; for the seed of the Faith of *Abraham* is the *Spiritual Seed* ; but if you say the *Promise* was made to *Isaac*, and so the *Obligation* lay upon him *as* in his own Person only, or only *as* the Legal either mere Carnal or believing seed descended from him, then the *Promise* is not sure to *all* the seed, not to the *Seed of the Faith of Abraham* under the *Gospel*, because this seed then, is not Entitled to *it as* seed, for it is in *Isaac* that *Abrahams seed* is called, according to Gen. 21. and

so the *Apostle* (who makes good their Title as *Abrahams* seed, and consequently as they were in *Isaac*,) was really out of the right, if you be in it.

But I have mentioned a *Concession* of yours in a *Former Letter*, and make use of it; least therefore you either should forget it, or should by some *Evasion* which I cannot think of *Elevate* the force of it, and so Create me new trouble hereafter, I will cite the passage now, but with this precaution, that I do not say you understand *precisely* the same persons as I do, to be intended in the 8th. and 9th. and 10th. verses, but I say you grant *there*, and there make much of it, that the *same* persons or subjects (be they what they will,) are to be understood as meant in the 9th. and 10th. verses, which are so in the 8th. For say you ["God having *promised* in the 8th. " verse to give unto *Abraham*, and to his " *Seed* after him the Land wherein he was " then a stranger, even all the Land of " *Canaan* for an Everlasting Possession, and " to be their God. In the very next verse " he is pleased to proceed to declare the " *Incumbence* now to be fastened on *them* upon the *forementioned account*, &c."] So that you grant, the *same* persons are under the *Incumbence* and *Obligation* that are under

der the *Promise*, and are so in the same respect, as being in the Obligation upon account of their being in the *Promise*, and the *Apostle* is plain, that the *Promise* is to *Abraham* and to all his Seed, the Seed which is of the Faith of *Abraham*, or the believing *Gentile*, as well as the Seed which is of the Law, or the Natural *Jew*; And I should think the *Apostles* Authority as good as any. And now, 'tis a proper time to answer your *question*, and to tell what Authors I follow, why, you see, they are Scriptural ones, such as *Paul* &c. the same Authors the first Reformers followed, and the same your Predecessors pretended to follow.

This is the proof I have that *Isaac* in the Spirit, or *Isaac* as he Represented Christ Mystical, and so the believing *Gentiles*, is meant in *Gen.* 17. 9. Against which, you offer me again *what* in effect, I have baffled over and over. But because it may afford me a *rise* of more express declaring what I have said formerly, and also of adding something which I had not such occasion to produce before, I shall consider it again.

You say then, "that *Isaac* in the Spirit,
 "or the believing *Gentiles* cannot be understood by the Seed in the 9th. verse,
 "because.

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“because the Seed there mentioned, is expressly commanded in the 10th. to be Circumcised.] Which (say I) is, In effect, to say it is so, because it is so. To conceive the force of which Reply, as well as of your Reason, I must have leave to enter into the State of Matters, as at present they do stand between us.

The 9th. verse is the parting point. You argue that the Seed in the 9th. verse, [*Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore Thou and thy Seed*] cannot be understood of the Spiritual Seed, [believing *Gentiles*,] because that Seed which is in the 9th. verse, is (say you) expressly commanded in the 10th. to be Circumcised; and that *that* is the meaning of *keeping the Covenant* in verse the 9th. I on the contrary, argue that the *Obligation* in the 9th. verse, cannot be understood *Determinately*, and particularly of *Circumcision*, because the subject of *it* is the same Seed to whom the Promise is made; namely, *All the Seed*, and Circumcision was not competent to *all*; and that therefore [*ye*] in the 10th. verse, on which the Obligation to be Circumcised is laid, cannot possibly include the *Seed* as in the 9th. verse, this is the true State.

For you therefore to take for granted that the Seed mentioned in the 9th. verse,

is included in [ye] in the 10th. is a thing so mean and pitiful; that in *English*, it is called *Begging*, Begging the question, for this is one of the Points *in question* between us: But to affirm that the Seed in the 9th. verse, is expressly commanded in the 10th. to be Circumcised, is *worse*, for in exprest terms, it is not [this is the Covenant which thou and thy Seed shall keep] but [this is the Covenant which ye shall keep,] and what is meant by [ye] whether *Abraham* and the Seed mentioned before in verse the 9th. or only He and *Ishmael*, and the other persons then present at the Institution of Circumcision, which God should speak to, is the question.

I do confess, the *Grammar* of the Text would have carried it well enough for your sence, and it would have run smoothly, [Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed; This is the Covenant which ye shall keep] if it had not pleased God to add [*between me and you, and thy Seed after thee :*] But yet even then I could not easily have understood how *Any* of the Seed could be excused from Circumcision. But that then, had been the only difficulty; but now there is *another*, and no small one; for God himself *Distinguishing* in the 10th. verse, between you and thy Seed after thee, [Thou

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[*This is the Covenant which you shall keep between me and you, and thy Seed after thee;*] and *thy Seed after thee* in the 10th. verse, being in all respects the same expression, without any the least alteration, with that in the 9th, and that also in one continued Speech, and consequently signifying the same *subjects* in all respects, what is plainer then that this *distinction* must be a *Key* to the whole Text, and that to open the Text in any wayes without *this*, will not be to unlock, but force it.

And this *Distinction* indeed is that which pinches and amazes you, and makes you so confused that you scarce know what you say, for in *one* place you say it resolutely, "*that there is no such Distinction but of my making*"; but in *another*, with greater modesty, you say, *that as appears to you, God doth not distinguish the [ye] from the Seed in the beginning of the 10th. verse, except as one was present, the other Future*.] And what is all this? but that he doth distinguish and that he doth not, and that he doth not distinguish except as he doth distinguish, and that as much as can be distinguished, (*viz.*) as one from many, and present persons from future, ah! Dear Sir you seem a little *unsettled*; and therefore it is time to give over.

But

But happily, I go too fast, and you will tell me that as you said, that no such distinction is but of my making, so you gave a reason for saying it, (*viz.*) That the *termes of every distinction must be opposite, else it is no distinction;*] And there is *Logick* for me: And sweet Sir for this I thank you [that there is no distinction but where opposition,] It is new, a new *Light* in *Logick*; Former Logicians (poor dark men, they) never saw it, one of them, and he no small one neither, *Dully* tells us, that Diversity is either Distinction or Opposition; and not one of them (so blind they be) but would tell, that Disparates are distinct, and are not opposites; And indeed Dear Sir your *Heart*, and *Tongue*, and *Hand*, are things distinct, but (I hope) not *Opposites*; Either other Logicians (all of them) are out of their Element; or you, yet, Good Sir not come into it.

Well, but however you express it, your meaning may be good, *ye, and thy Seed* may be conjoyned in one party in the Obligation, as you say they are, though by the way, to be conjoyned, *they*, in themselves, must be distinct. But what you add, is neither good nor true; (*viz.*) "*That the Seed which I would make a Member of the Distinction, is a self Created term*"

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so you say, but mean (I think) a Creature of mine. But I assure you 'tis not so; I am no Creator; I added not these termes [*between me and you, and thy Seed;*] they are the Holy Spirits, and not mine, and seem even at first sight, to imply a distinction of *parties*, as well as of *persons*, and to sound as if the Covenant were *Tripartite*, but yet, as I love not skirmishing for words only, call them two parties, or three parties, or four parties if you will, provided you distinguish between God and *you*, and *thy Seed*, and do not make *you* and *thy Seed* all one *thing*, as well as all one *party*; I assure you it shall break no squares.

But by occasion of your directing me unto the second and fourth verses of the 17th. of *Gen.* to prove the Covenant *Bi-partite*; give me leave to observe to you, (and in the Observation to imply an Answer,) that *Abraham*, as he is the subject in the Promises in the whole transaction between God and him, doth in diverse places, undergo a diverse consideration, he is considered two ways; First, he is considered *singly* by himself, and in his own Person, and so he is transacted with, and Promises are made to him, verses 2. 4, 5, 6. [*I will make my Covenant between me and thee, my Covenant is with thee; Thy Name shall be*

no more *Abram*, but *Abraham*, I will make thee *many Nations*.] In all these a Covenant is made with *Abraham*, as he is considered singly, and in his own Person; without any mention of his Seed, or any concernment of them. But then secondly, he is considered *jointly*, as concerned with his Seed, and so, he is transacted with, and promises are made and ratified to him in the 7th. and 8th. verses; [*and I will Establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, &c. and I will give unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee, the Land in which thou art a Stranger*] Now the Covenant as made with *Abraham* singly, is *Bipartite*; but as made with *Abraham* as he is joyned with his Seed, it is *Tripartite*; for there a *new party*, or (which is as much as I said I would contend for, or be understood to mean) a new, another Person is taken in. Again, as *Abraham* had undergone a double consideration in the Covenant or Promise, and was transacted with both *singly* in his own Person, and also *jointly* with his Seed; So answerably, in the general Obligation verse the 9th, he is expressly and in terms made the subject of it, both *singly* by himself, and also as *joyned* with the Seed; [*Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore,*] there he is *singly*; [*Thou*
and

and thy Seed after thee in their Generations,] there he is joyned : So exact it pleases God to be, even in termes, in adjusting of the subjects in the *Promise* and *Obligation*, and in making of them Answering ; All to shew, that those that are included in the *one*, are equally implied in the *other*, and that by the same account and consideration, by which any lay their claim to the *former*, by the very same consideration, and on the same account they come under the ties of the *Latter*. On the whole, it is not so absurd if duly weighed, to say (which yet I do not peremptorily say) that in that part of the Covenant in which *Abraham* is joyned with the Seed, *he* should stand for his *natural posterity*, as there the Seed doth for *Christ* Mystical : And so much the Text you Cite, namely, *Gen. 9. 9, 11, 12.* Implies, (*viz.*) that the Parents represent and stand for their Children ; though in other Respects, that Text is no wayes Parallel to this, *Gen. 17. 10.* nor serves your purpose ; For there it is [*between me and you, and your Seed*] but here [*between me and you, and thy Seed, not your Seed,*] and you have told me, that on every point of the Law, Mountains of sence do hang.

I have proved the Distinction [*between God and you, and thy Seed*] to be Real :
and

and in prospect that I might be able to do so, you have provided me an Explication ; which is, " that when God saith, [*This* " *is my Covenant which ye shall keep between* " *me and you*] in your Opinion, it can be " understood no otherwise then thus, [*be-* " *tween me and you*] that is, between me " and thou *Abraham*, together with thy " Son *Ishmael*, and the rest of the Family " now present with thee ; And not only be- " tween me and you *now present*, but be- " tween me and *you*, and *thy Seed* after " [thee before expressed.] But oh ! sweet Sir recollect a little here, for I fear you do mistake your self ; These are the very words of the Paraphrase, the Mizmaze Paraphrase ; However, it makes me hope we shall agree at last, your off's and on's, and on's and off's are good signes of it. No say you, stop there ; *For thy Seed after thee in the 9th. verse, is included in the first* [ye] *of the 10th. verse,*] But how (say I) can that be, if it be excluded the *second* ; from which in the 10th. it is distinguished ? But to press you the more, I ask you, doth not in your opinion, [thy Seed in the 9th. verse.] Include the Present as well as Future Seed ? You tell me it doth, else *how came Ishmael* under the Duty ! I ask *again*, doth not the first ye (or you) in the

the 10th. verse, in your Opinion include the Seed in the 9th. ? you tell me it doth. I ask further, doth not the second [you] in the 10th. verse signifie the same with the first [ye or you?] here you must be at a stand, for if the *first* you [or ye] include the Seed Present and Future, and the *second* [you] do signifie the same as the first, then the second [you] must include the Future Seed as well as the Present, and so the addition to it [*of thy Seed after thee*] must be *superfluous*, and where then, will be the Mountains of sence hanging on that word ! But on the other hand, if you say the *second* [you] doth signifie the present Family only, and the *first* you [or ye] the Family both Present and Future, you make the Scripture unintelligible, and God not only to speak ambiguously, but against all the Rules of Grammar and common speaking, and against good sence, to make a *Pronounne Demonstrative* not to Demonstrate, and though standing in Coherence and Relation, yet not to Cohere, not to Relate. *This is my Covenant which you [or ye] shall keep between me and you* ; What you I pray now but the First ? *You* that are to keep the Covenant, are to keep it between me and you. To take the *first* you [or ye] for *some Persons* , and the *second* for others,

is non-fensical : Both standing plainly for the same, and therefore if [between me and you] be as you say, [between me and thee Abraham, and Ishmael, and the rest of the Family here present] the first you [or ye] must be understood of *them* too ; and that's the whole of the Paraphrase.

However, I am glad you have found the *present Family* spoken to any where in the Text, for that granted, I think my sence above exception, and that it will lye even with all that goes before, and all that followes after ; Taking [*thy Seed after thee*] for *Isaac* in the Letter and Spirit in all the verses : *I will Establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed ; I will give to thee and thy Seed ; Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed. This is the Covenant which you shall keep* [speaking to the present Family, *Abraham* being there] *between me and you, and thy Seed after thee, [casting his Eye on Abraham.]*

Before I leave this point, I am to mind you of a bold Abuse you put upon me; when you intimate as my Opinion, that Baptisin is *immediately* intended in the 9th. verse, whereas (you know) I have told you *ten times* over, that I understand the keeping of the Covenant there generally, for
keep

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keeping of it in the *sign* of it (whatever the sign at any time be,) and not *particularly* and *determinately*, for keeping of it immediately either in Circumcision, or in Baptism; Indeed in that moment, when the general Obligation was imposed of keeping the sign, neither Baptism nor Circumcision in *particular* was yet Instituted; Though Circumcision was, in the very next Moment. I confess, had the keeping of the Covenant in the sign of it, which is the duty enjoyned in the 9th. verse, been a keeping of it *particularly* and *Determinately*, in either Baptism or Circumcision; Then (as you object,) either *Abraham* must have been *Baptized*, if Baptism had been intended particularly; or else, *Isaac* in the Spirit [the believing *Gentiles*, the true Spiritual Seed] must have been *Circumcised*. if Circumcision had immediately and particularly been meant: But that *term* being understood but *generally* and *indeterminately*; *Abraham* and his Seed are only obliged by it to keep the Covenant in *some* sign; In that sign *Respectively*, which should be the sign of their *Respective* times: And thus *Abraham* did keep it in Circumcision, the sign in his time; And so did *Isaac* in the Letter, as the Natural Off-spring of *Abraham*, in the sign that then was: But Spiritual I-

M
Isaac

Isaac (or the believing *Gemiles*) could not keep it in the sign *then*; They not having being *then*, and so no particular sign was ordained for them *then*; but when ever they should be, They (being the Seed of *Abraham*) are tyed by the Obligation [verse the 9th] to keep the Covenant in the sign of it, *viz.* in that sign which then should be (the sign,) when they became Seed.

And on this occasion it may not be omitted to be noted, that though *Isaac* in his own person, as a Natural Descendant of *Abraham*, was Circumcised, as in that Capacity he ought to be; yet (being to sustain the Person of *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, and in the Mytery to stand for and be a Type of that Seed, which is of the faith of *Abraham*) he was not as *Ishmael* (who was the Type and Figure of the Seed which was of the Law,) present at the Institution of the Ordinance of Circumcision, designed to be the sign of the Legal Seed; *Ishmael* was one of those that God did speak to [every Man-Child among you shall be Circumcised] but *Isaac* was not there; He was unborn: This Timing of the Institution should be of some significancy.

To this I add, for greater Humiliation of the Holy Mytery, that even the calling

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of the Natural Seed in *Isaac*, and the appropriating of the Promises in the Letter, to the Seed of *Abraham* as it did derive by *Isaac*, was Mystical; And shewed, that as all the Promises of God are *yea*, and *Amen* in *Christ*, so that Christians and true Believers are in *him*, the true Inheritors of the Promise, in the Spiritual meaning of it, and indeed, why else, should the Seed be called in *Isaac*, *Gen. 21. 12.* were it not for a Mystery? For if by Seed, *there* is meant (as in the Letter it is) only the Carnal Seed, one would think, it should have been more proper to have called it in *Ishmael*, the Type and Figure of that Seed, than in *Isaac* who represented *Another*, and so indeed it would have been, if *but* the Carnal Seed had been called in *Isaac*, without any Relation, any Aspect at all unto the Spiritual. Here also it may not be improper to observe the difference in the several Blessings which it pleased God to confer on *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, *Gen. 17. 19, 20, 21.* no mention in the least of any Seed in the Blessing of *Ishmael*, though in the fruitfulness is promised to him; there be an implication of Children, but in *that* of *Isaac*, there is mention of Seed; The Covenant is Established with him, and with his Seed after him. As if the term Seed was Mystical and

and Spiritual, and did not only signifie Natural Children, but Spiritual also. Judge now, whether *Isaac* be not, both in the Promise, and in the Obligation too, to be considered as he represents the believing *Gentiles*, the true Spiritual Seed.

All that I have offered hitherto, is on occasion of your *first Reason* to evince, that *Isaac* in the Spirit, or *Isaac* as he represented the Spiritual Seed, is not intended in the general Obligation verse the 9th. and that was taken from *Isaac* himself: I will now proceed to the *second*, (for so I do reduce to order what you in some confusion have written without any,) and this is from *Ishmael*; For say you, "it was not under that precise notion that the present Obligation on verse the 9th. was fastned on him, (*viz.* *Isaac*) there being nothing of this nature mentioned throughout the whole Context, but rather as he was Descended from *Abraham* according to the Flesh, for otherwise *Ishmael* had been excluded from the Duty there mentioned, who could pretend nothing of any Spiritual Relation to *Abraham*, as *Isaac* did, and yet it cannot be denyed but *Ishmael* was included therein, as well as *Isaac*."

But this requires little Answer, as running altogether upon Mistakes; For *Isaac*

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in the Letter is meant indeed, but *Isaac* in the Spirit principally. Again, there is as little in the whole Con-Text mentioned of *Christ*, (and yet I hope you will not exclude him too from being meant,) as there is of the Obligations being fastned on *Isaac*, as he represented the Spiritual Seed. And as for *Ishmael*, it was *Abrahams* Duty to Circumcise him, and he Circumcised him as he did his Slaves, under the Notion of his own, his Property, and not precisely as his Seed. And if *Ishmael* himself was under any Obligation to Circumcise his (as I conceive he was,) it was as he was comprehended in the *you*, to whom expressly the command of Circumcision was given, he was also obliged in *Abraham*. * But that he was obliged to do it, as being *Abrahams* Seed, by vertue of the general injunction, *Gen. 17. 9*. I positively deny. For that Seed only, and no other is obliged by vertue of the general injunction there, which is the Object of the Promise before; That Seed only which is in the Promise in verse the 8th. is the Seed put under the duty in verse the 9th. now *Ishmael* was farr enough from being the Object of the Promise in verse the 8th. so far, that He is expressly and in Termes excluded from it; The Scripture not only saying, In *Isaac* shall

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166. An Argument

shall thy Seed be called, but also, cast out the Bond Woman and her Son, for the Son of this Bond Woman shall not be Heir with my Son, with Isaac, Gen. 21. 10. And now bethink also, how can the Spiritual Seed as well as the Carnal in your sense; that is, *Isaac* as well as *Ishmael* be in the Promise and the Obligation too, as you say they be, if *Ishmael* were not *Heir* of the Promise, nor at all in it.

And here I had dismissed this point, but that it comes into my mind, that against *Abrahams* standing (* with *Ishmael* &c.) in the business of Circumcision for his Natural Posterity, (which yet is usual in the Scriptures for the Fathers to do, and is so (as I noted before) in the very Covenant of *Noah* which you mentioned;) You object, *How then did he receive Circumcision as a seal of the Righteousness by Faith?* To which I answer very well; for the sign of Circumcision is Annexed to the Covenant and Promise, as now Established; *I will Establish my Covenant, &c.* The Promise of Canaan, it was made to *Abraham*; and to his Seed before, *Gen. 15. 7, 8. &c.* 18. but now is Ratified and Confirmed, and in token of its being so, a sign is put to it; So that the signing of the Covenant with Circumcision, being in token of its rati-

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ratification, was a sealing, (* the sign was a seal) a Confirming of the Righteousness by faith; that is, of the Reward of Righteousness, or of that Inheritance which God, for *Abrahams* believing of his Promise to him, (so improbable, so unlikely, and in Nature so impossible, (*viz.*) that he should have Seed as the Stars) conferred upon *him*. For so it must be understood, as will appear most evidently from a view of the whole passage, *Gen.* 15. 5, 6, 7. for *there*, we have a Relation; *First*, of Gods *Promise* to *Abraham*, which was of Seed as Stars, in the 5th verse; And then *Secondly*, of *Abrahams* belief, and Faith in that improbable Promise, in the beginning of the 6th. verse, *Abraham* believed the Lord; And *Thirdly*, of the *Reward* the Lord gave him for that his great Faith; and this, *First*, more *generally*, in the latter part of the 6th. verse, and he accounted it unto him for Righteousness; That is, the Lord Rewarded him, for so, in the Language of the Holy Scriptures, to account for Righteousness is; It is graciously to give a Person the Reward of Righteousness, for a thing which in it self, is not compleat Righteousness; And then *Secondly*, more *Particularly*, how he Rewarded him, and that is verse the 7th. by giving him the

M 4

pro-

Promise of the Land of *Canaan*. And indeed *our* Faith is accounted unto us for Righteousness, as *Abraham* was to Him; We have by Divine Grace, the Heavenly Inheritance for believing in Christ, as He the Promise of the Temporal, * (though not that only) for Believing *Jehovah*. And now, why might not all this be, and yet *Abraham* * in the business of Circumcision represent his own Posterity; (* though I do not positively say he did) and the rather, because the Reward (* in the Letter) was *Canaan*, which now was Sealed and Confirmed to him in the sign of Circumcision, put to the ratification of that Covenant and Promise, in which God had before conveyed, and passed it.

Thus I have proved *(and as he represented Christ Mystical, or the Spiritual Seed, to be intended in the Obligation,* verse the 9th. but it seems I might have saved so much Ink and Paper, for at last you tell me plainly, "that *Abraham* and all his, "Present or Future, Carnal or Spiritual, "were concerned in the Obligation as well "as in the Promise, some way or other. [That is well,] in the Promises Temporal, the Carnal Seed were concerned, in the "Blessings Temporal and Spiritual, the "Believing Seed of *Abraham* were concerned,

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“concerned, and both the one and the other
 “~~I~~ *[and what are they, (say I) but the Nati-*
 “~~onal and Believing Seed of Abraham,]
 “were also concerned in the Obligation,
 “verse the 9th. *[So far you are just, I,*
 “*but you must not be mistaken, you add,]*
 “(a. c.) to be Circumcised, for *Isaac*, and
 “all the believing *Jews* were Circumcised.
 “as well as *Ismael*.] And what, Dear
 Sir, was *Isaac* and the believing *Jews*, the
 only believing Seed of *Abraham*? And
 doth *Isaac* stand but for believing *Jews*, and
 not for believing *Gentiles*? I pray, recon-
 cile your self unto the Apostle, *Gal. 3. 14,*
15, 16. &c. and 4. 22. &c. to 31. and
Rom. 4. 12, 16. And remember, I have
 clearly proved, in the Correct Copy of my
 first Letter, that *Ismael* and *Isaac* are, the
 former the Seed under the Law, the latter,
 Believers under the Gospel.~~

“Ay! but what if *Isaac* stand in the
 “Obligation, verse the 9th. for the Spirit-
 “tual Seed, or believing *Gentiles*, what
 “then? What is this to the Baptism of In-
 “fants,] I answer, I refer you for a fur-
 ther answer to the Corrected Copy of my
 first Letter; There you may plainly see,
 what it is to Infants Baptism; I repeat it
 not, because it would be endless to go round,
 and say over again the same things: A Cir-
cle

de is infinite ; There is *another* word for you to whet on, but I hope you will not mistake it for [God], as you did the word *Eternal* in my last for [in Eternity,] against common use,

Aeterno sed erant sibi magna Volumina
versu. Tibul l. 2. The like in Cicero; and
in Seneca, &c.

Upon the whole, I hope I have most fully Asserted the Paraphrase I made upon the Text in Controversie ; The *Paraphrase* do I say, or dare I mention *that* again ! why *that*, “ that is, to you, the most involved, “ tortious, intricate that ever you heard of, “ except *Origens* Allegorical and Mystical “ Commentaries.] And I believe you ; but then, how well the Apostle, who is my Author, will escape your censure, I know not, but it is well for him, and for me too, that the Paraphrase is *all* this but *unto* you ; The sizes of Humane understanding are very different, and yours is not the Measure and Standard of good sence, or of Judgment ; others more unbyassed, and as judicious persons will not think the *worse* of the Paraphrase, nor the *better* of you for your calling it names.

Only,

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Only, as to the great ~~add~~ you make up on the disjunctive Particle [but] inserted in my Paraphrase, I must tell you; that but a grain of either the Candour of which you make profession, or of true soundness of Judgment, would have prevented it. For that [but,] I did not add it unto the Text; I never insisted on it.; I only put it in a *Parenthesis* to shew that a Particle (as small as that was) if understood and supplied (as the like is done many times in other Scriptures, and must be done to make the sence entire, see *Job. 16. 5.*) would have put my sence of the Text out of question. I but put it in to make you sensible of my meaning; which conceived, you might leave it out again; for my sence is good without it; and the ~~connexive~~ particle [now] would do as well to my purpose, and one of them, to make the sence compleat, must be understood, if by [you,] you mean restrictively, those there present only: in the one [you] you do, and therefore must in both, the reason is the same for both, as for one.

Let it be granted (as by you it is) that God doth speak to any in the term [you] as present, I may make good my Paraphrase against the World, for the suppo-
sal

fal of an *Apostrophe*, is all that seemeth Harsh and Difficult in it ; Suppose him to mean but them there present in the first [you ;] that is, to mean *that* in the first, which you your self do grant he means in the *second*, and the business is ended. But as for your *Paraphrase*, it is too general and loose, and off from the Text, and not a Paraphrase upon it.

What you add in answer to my several questions, is but Retailing of what I had before, and have again considered *now* in gross ; only where you say, “ that the reason why in the 10th. verse, and afterward &c. the Holy Ghost useth a restrictive term, ye shall keep &c. is because it would have been improper to have repeated the word Seed, (according to the usual formes of Speech generally in custom among men) it being enough when Abraham and his Seed had been once or twice mentioned to say [you] as there was further occasion to make mention of them.]

I answer, that it is not once or twice, but four times, and that is *always* all along [thee and thy Seed] before he came to institute

stitute Circumcision, which was not competent to all the Seed : And why I pray, not Humane *formes of Speech* observed before, by the using of [you], after once or twice mentioning, instead of, [thee and thy Seed :]

Again, shew me, among all the *formes of Speech* generally in custom among men, one such as *this* is in your *sence*, where *two* you's, in the same Coherence and Relation, shall be understood diversely ; The first of them for one subject, the second for another : *This is the Covenant which you shall keep between me and you, which you shall keep, meaning some persons ; between me and you, meaning other Persons.* If this be your *Grammar*, it is new too, and all as new as your *Logick*.

In fine, in your *sence* it would have run smooth, and more according to the *formes of Speech* generally in custom among men, in these termes ; *Thou shalt keep my Covenant, therefore thou and thy Seed ; This is the Covenant which you shall keep between me and you* [omitting thy Seed after thee.] *every man child among you shall be Circumcised : But [thy Seed] being put in with*
the

the *second* [you], and so distinguished from *it*, clearly implies that *it* was not intended to be *Comprehended in the first*.

But the *Controversie* must, and shall have end; (and the sooner, because (as you do manage it) it is become a wordy brabbling business; as also, for that you treat me in it but (as *Aesop* did his Masters Guests) with Tongue, Tongue still, nothing but Tongue in several dishes.) And that *it* may have end as fairly as it took beginning, seeing we have joyned Issue, and have made our Arguments; I propose that you elect some (two or three) of your Friends, and at any time, in any House at *Townes* within a Moneth at your appointment, meet me with the like number of mine, to hear the whole matter; and Judge upon it: Else the World must; You may do with your Papers as you list, I will Publish mine, in vindication of.

Decem. 26. 1682.

Your Affectionate Friend.

R. B.

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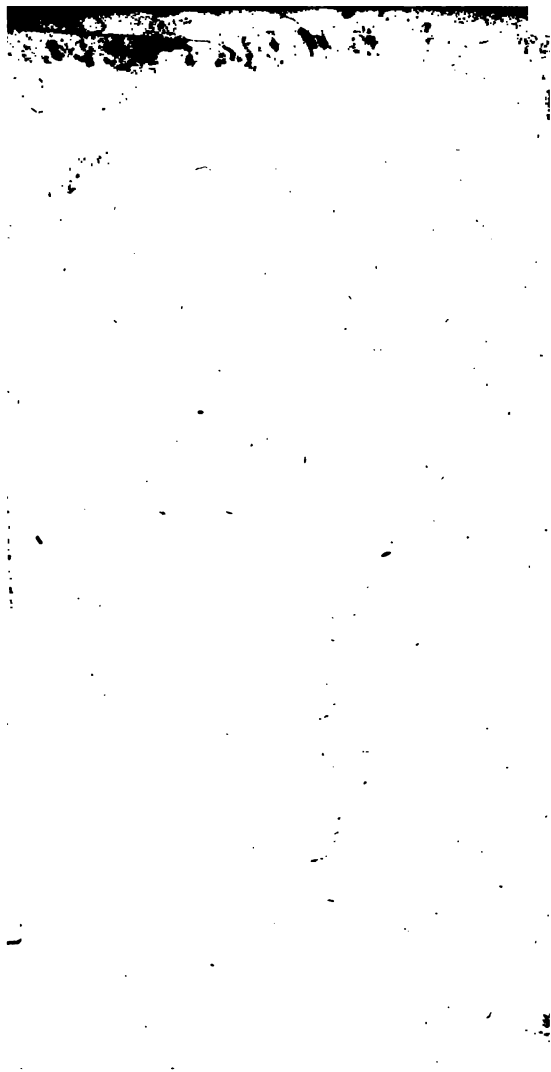
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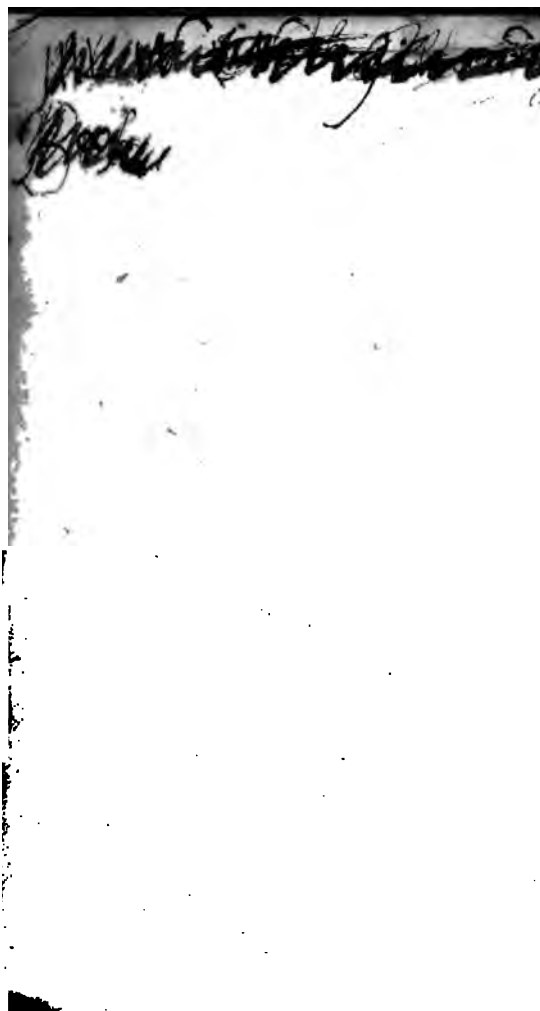
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